

THE
T R U T H
O F T H E
C H R I S T I A N
F A I T H :

O R,
*The Triumph of the Cross
of Christ.*

B Y
H I E R. S A V O N A R O L A.

*Done into English out of the Authours
own Italian Copy.*

A work very usefull
To confute the Atheisme, Infidelity, and
Apostasie of this later age ;

*That the mouth of all gainsayers may be
stopped, and every tongue constrained
to confess that Christ Jesus is Lord, to
the glory of God the Father.*

C A M B R I D G E :
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
CHRISTIAN
RELIGION

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for



¶ To the much
honoured
Francis S^t John,
Esquire.

TC 173/15.

SIR,

 *F I had any thing whol-
ly my own which might
seem worthy of your ac-
ceptance, I should with
the greater freedome address my
self to you ; and yet such is my
confidence, which I hope you will
not condemn, that I would rather
borrow of another, then not have
something which might testifie my*

The Epistle

unfeigned respects to you. This Authour, possibly, might have pleased you better in his own Italian, who know how to make a right judgement and separation of things: however, I know you will not disdain to look upon him in this English dress, wherewith I have attired him; nor blame me for having cut off some few shreds, that he might with more credit appear amongst us. Notwithstanding you may have read several others (as besides the ancients there are many modern writers, both of our own and other nations) who have writ excellently upon this subject; yet I leave you to judge, whether the strength of this Authours reasoning, the exactness of his methode, and the comprehensiveness of
of

Dedicatory.

of his discourse, all flowing in the most plain and familiar manner, and so arguing the greatest learning and usefulness, make him not to be rankt with the greatest. Italy we know is not inferiour to any climate in the producing of excellent things in all kinds; what is good there usually is the best; and such is the genius of the English, that as they conform much with the manners of those of that Countrey, so they are much taken with what comes thence, which I ascribe more to their judgement then fancy, and therefore shall hope that this piece thus copied out, will not be condemned, because the Original was framed on the other side of the Alps; but rather induce all of

The Epistle

solid judgements to view it the more, and to make use of their reason, that they may see whether this Authour reasoneth; or no. I presume, as you will much condole with me the miseries of these late times, that after so great a splendour of the Gospet, and so many burning and shining lights which have appeared in this Nation, there should be found so many, who have renounced the Christian Religion in their lives, and some who dare to blaspheme it even in their words; so you will approve my choice of this Authour, who lived in the thickest darkness of Popery, as the fittest to convince such, how little they have to plead for themselves, after they shall consider how

Dedicatory.

how unanswerably he pleads against them; and to move them to acknowledge their profaneness, as well as their Atheisme and Infidelity; unless they be resolved to quit their reason together with their religion, and to denie themselves to be men as well as Christians. My comfort is, that notwithstanding this great defection both of faith and good manners, there are so many yet among us, even of the best rank, to whom Christ crucified is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and who walk so, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; and more particularly, considering my former relations to you, it is my great joy, Dear Sir, that above

The Epistle

all other learning, wherein you have so discerning a taste, you most value that of the Scriptures, which you have known of a childe, and which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus; that whatever interests or priviledges you may pretend to otherwise, you wave all, and esteem them as nothing in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, of whom you have learned to be humble and meek, that you may finde that rest which otherwise cannot be found. This made that most accomplished Gentleman, [Mr. Henry Danvers] the dear companion of your early travells and studies, so precious

Dedictory.

cious in the eyes of God and all good men, that his memorie is still had in honour, with all to whom his very name was but known, whilest those who knew him intimately, upon every remembrance of his death, expresse their high value of him with their tears. This is that which exalts all Nobilitie and Gentry to the highest pitch of honour, making them Right Honourable indeed. And whilest we have so great examples, who so lively set forth the truth of the Christian Religion, both in their lives and deaths, we may with the greater assurance dispute it with the Adversaries: whilest persons of eminency thus acknowledge Christ, who can for shame deny him?

The Epistle; &c.

him? God Almighty increase
their number, and enrich you
more and more with his graces
and blessings; in whose protecti-
on I leave you, ever remaining,

S I R,

Yours most affectionately

in all true love

and service,

W. B.



To the Reader.

A note out of *Communes* concerning this Authour.

T*hat which Communes in his History of Charles the VIII chap. 25. relates of this Authour, is very remarkable. Namely, That coming from Venice (whither he was sent Embassadour, to meet his Master Charles the 8th at Florence) he went to visite Frier Hierom,*
dwelling in a reformed Convent,
(who had lived there fifteen years, and was reputed to be of a holy life) because he had always preached in favour of the King, and his words had kept

He was a Predicant Frier of S. Dominicks order, born at Ferrara, and Prior of the Convent of S. Mark in Florence.

To the Reader.

kept the *Florentines* from opposing the *French*: never Preacher having so much credit as he then had in that Citie. He assured them always of the Kings coming, and notwithstanding all that was said to the contrary, persevered therein; saying, That he was sent by God to chastise the Tyrants, of *Italy*, and that nothing could resist or oppose him. He spoke also of many things that should fall out at *Pisa*, and that the King should enter that City, and that the same day the State of *Florence* should die, which accordingly came to pass: for *Peter de Medices* was driven thence the same day. Many other things also which he had preached, were fulfilled, as the death of *Lawrence de Medices*.

More-

To the Reader.

Moreover, he preacht publicly, and said that he had it by revelation from God, *That the State of the Church should be reformed by the sword*, (which is not yet come to pass, although it was then very near it) and this he yet maintains. Many blamed him, because he said, God had revealed it to him, others beleev'd him: for my own part, I take him to be a good man. I ask'd him further, If the King might pass without danger of his person, considering the great preparations which the *Venetians* were then a making; whereof he could speak better then I, although I but lately came thence. Whereunto he answered, That the King should have to do with them in his return, but the honour should
be

To the Reader.

be his, although he had but an

The Venetians and the Duke of Milan with about 40000 well-armed, gave the King bartel in his return into France at Fernoùé, who with 9000 put them to flight, and held on his march.

hundred men in his train; and that God who had brought him thither, would also bring him back again: but because he had not acquitted himself well in the reformation of the Church as he ought to have done, and had suffered his men to rob and pillage as well those of his own party, who opened their gates to receive him, as them which were his enemies; that God had pronounced sentence against him, & that God would make him feel the smart of his scourge; but however, that I should tell him, if he would take pity upon his people, and advise with himself to keep his souldiers from doing ill, and punish

To the Reader.

punish them that should do so, as his office required, that God would repeal, or at least mitigate the sentence; and that he should not think to be excused, in saying that he himself did no ill. Moreover, he told me that he would go to the King himself, and tell him the same things: which accordingly he did, speaking to have restitution made to the *Florentines* of their places. At the same time I had in my thoughts the death of the *Daulphin* the Kings onely son, (which happened not long after) for I saw no other thing which the King might lay to his heart. *The same Historian gives us a further account of his death, chap. 53, saying*, That the Pope and the Duke of *Millan* writ often to the
Floren-

To the Reader.

Florentines against him, that many decryed him for an Heretick, and at last that the Pope sent his Commission to make his process, so that he with two more were burnt ; all that he was charged with being this , That he had sowed discord in the citie, and that what he said of prophesie, was but that which his friends of the Council revealed to him. *Thus far Communes.*



The



The Authours Preface.

THe glorious Triumph of the Cross hath in it so great mysteries, that being willing to describe it against the impious babbling of the wise men of this world, I embrace a work certainly above my strength; but I hope that the Lord will be my helper. And notwithstanding the Faith is so well grounded and established by the miraculous workes of Christ Jesus our Savi-

The Authours

Saviour, and the doctrine of sacred Divines, that it may seem superfluous to search further; Nevertheless some involv'd in vice are so far blinded at this time, that they grope after darkness at mid-day, and therefore despise those things that are heavenly, divine, and wonderfull. In consideration whereof being inflamed with the zeal of Gods house, I intend, as far as I shall be assisted from above, to refresh mens memories with the things past done by our Saviour

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Preface.

viour, now almost extinct in their hearts; that I may awaken them out of that heavy sleep into which they are fallen. And although the Faith cannot be demonstrated by natural causes and principles; yet from what hath been and is continually seen in the Church, such strong reasons may be collected, that no one of sound minde can oppose them. And yet no one doth therefore beleieve that faith proceeds from these reasons, but (as the Apostle saith) it is the gift of God;
given

The Authours

given to men not by any merit,
but of his bounty, that no one
may glory in himself. We
will then form these reasons
to confirm them who waver
in the faith, and to dispose
those that beleeve not to re-
ceive this supernatural light,
and to arm Beleevers that
they may the better combate
the wicked, shewing them
their folly, and to draw out
of their hands the simple and
innocent who are deceived by
them. Which is not at all to de-
rogate from the faith; although
it be commonly said, that faith
when

Preface.

when it is proved by humane reason hath no reward; because this relates to them who otherwise would not beleieve, and therefore beleieving onely because they are convinced by reason, they have no reward for such belief; But he who being first enlightened by God, without any other proof embraceth the faith; If afterward the better to confirm himself and others, he searcheth after the reasons thereof both with God and men, he deserves to be commended. The Apostle
Saint

The Authours Preface.

Saint Peter exhorting us to sanctifie the Lord God in our hearts, and to be ready to satisfie every one that requires a reason of the faith and hope that is in us. And therefore in this book we will dispute onely with reason; not grounding our selves upon any authority, but proceeding in such a way, as if we were to beleieve no one in the world how wise soever, but onely natural reason; to which every man that is not a fool is constrained to consent.



The Truth of the Christian Faith:

Or,
The Triumph of the
Cross of Christ.

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAP. I.

Of the manner of proceeding.



WE must come to the
knowledge of invisi-
ble things, by the
things that are visi-
ble ; because all our knowledge
B begins

begins at the sense, which onely knows extrinsecal corporeal accidents: But the understanding by its subtilty penetrates even to the substance of natural things, from the consideration whereof it raiseth it self to the knowledge of things invisible and immaterial; inasmuch as contemplating the substance, the property, the order, the causes, and the motion of visible things, 'tis lead by little and little to the knowledge of invisible substances, and finally of the divine Majestie it self; in such manner, that by the outward accidents and operations of man, we come to the knowledge of our own soul, and of its invisible part. Philosophers therefore by the contemplation of the Universe, namely of the heavens
and

Ch. I. *the Christian Faith.* 3

and their ornament & influence, and likewise of the elements, their properties, operations, and divers mixtures; of the variety of things compounded of the elements, of their motions and proper perfections, and finally of the wonderfull order, greatness, and beauty of this visible world, lift up the eyes of their mind to the speculation of things invisible; which having found, they endeavour as much as they can, to find out likewise their nature and propertie. As they therefore by this way know natural things to be the works of God, by which we may come to the knowledge of his infinite power and glory; so will we demonstrate that the works which have been, and still are seen in the Church

of God, are divine works, by which we may come to the knowledge of the infinite glory and Majestie of our Saviour Christ Jesus that is invisible to us. In the same manner then as Philosophers gathered before their eyes all the visible things of the Universe, and by the wonderfull works of nature were constrained to confess that God was the first cause of every thing, and that the works of nature were the works of an understanding that cannot erre; so it is needfull that we recollect together all the wonderfull works of Christ, by which we will shew him to be the first cause of every thing, and that all his works proceeded from God, who cannot erre: not that Christians beleieve (as we have

Ch. i. *the Christian Faith.* 3

have said) for these reasons, who are firm in the faith by the supernatural light given them of God, otherwise our faith would not be faith but opinion; but with these, Christians are confirmed and strengthened; and hereby shew to the Adversaries of the faith, that we do not believe these things lightly but with the greatest gravity and wisdom. That we may therefore the better gather together before our eyes all the works of Christ which have been done and are continually done in the Church, we will describe them under the figure of a triumphant chariot, which shall have a similitude with the whole universe.

CHAP. II.

Of the triumph of Christ; from whence the arguments of faith are drawn.

GOD being of an infinite power, wisdom and goodness, cannot be known by one creature alone, but very imperfectly; and therefore Philosophers come to the knowledge of his Majesty by the order of the universe, which results not from one creature alone, but as it were from innumerable; which by the natural tie that they have together, depending one upon another, may all of them easily be gathered together before our eyes. And in like manner the power, and wisdom, and goodness of Christ cannot be understood

Ch. 2. *the Christian Faith.* 7

stood by one onely work of his, but if we set all the wonderfull works that Christ hath done before the eyes of our mind, collecting from these not one onely reason, but many, we shall be constrained to confess, that Christ crucified is true God: for if one work or argumentation will not do it, all together will have such force, that every one, who is not of a perverse froward mind must needs consent to it. But because it is not so easy to present to mens sight all the works of Christ, as it is natural things, which are tied together under the heaven with a wonderfull order, it seems to me a necessary thing to recollect them all under the representation of a triumphant chariot, that every

mean understanding may the better contemplate them together. Let us therefore first set before our eyes a chariot with four wheels, and Christ riding in it in a triumphant manner, crowned with thornes, and all wounded; by which his passion and death is set forth, whereby he overcame the whole world. Above his head let there be a light, as a sun having three faces, in figure of the holy Trinity; from which let there stream out a wonderfull splendor which may enlighten his humanity with the whole Church, let him hold the cross in his left hand with all the instruments of his Passion, and in his right the Scripture of the old and new Testament. At his feet let the Sacraments be placed.

Ch. 2. *the Christian Faith.* 9

placed. Before his chariot let the Apostles and preachers be set, appearing as if they drew the chariot, and let the Patriarchs and Prophets march before them with innumerable multitudes of men and women of the Old Testament. Let there be all about the chariot, as a garland, a great multitude of Martyrs, and about them the Doctors of the Church, with books open in their hands; right after the chariot let there follow innumerable multitudes of men and women of all conditions; Jews, Greeks, Latines, Barbarians, rich, poor, learned, unlearned, great, small, old and young, all which with one heart let them praise Christ. And all about this great multitude as well of the

Old, as New Testament, let us set innumerable squadrons of enemies, adversaries to the Church of Christ; Emperours, Kings, Princes, Potentates, Wisemen, Philosophers, hereticks, bond, free, men and women, people of every language and countrey; near to which let the idols be placed cast down and broken in pieces, and the books of hereticks burnt, and all sects contrary to Christ confuted, and their Religion overthrown and reprobated. This chariot thus described and set out before our eyes, will be as a new world, whence we will draw a new Philosophy. Therefore for the first cause, and for invisible things, to the knowledge whereof Philosophers labour to arrive by the things

Ch. 2. *the Christian Faith.* IT

things that are seen; we have placed above the head of Christ the holy Trinity, which we confess to be true God, and before it stands Christ as he is man, with an infinite multitude of Angels & blessed souls, which are things invisible to us, to the knowledge whereof we come by the visible things we have placed about the chariot. And, as Philosophers say, that after invisible substances, the heaven is the principal cause of all things generated under it; so we say, that after the divine invisible Majesty, the cross and passion of Christ is the principal cause of grace, and of our salvation. And as the elements succeed the heaven, which have all their vertue from it; so the Sacraments of the Church
fol---

follow the Passion of Christ, which from it obtain all their vertue. After the elements in the world, follow the seeds and particular causes of things; and for the seeds in our Triumph we put the Evangelical doctrine, and for the particular causes we have described the Apostles, Patriarchs, Prophets, Martyrs, and Doctors, who whilest they lived begat men anew in Christ. Finally, the effects follow in this world, that is, the things produced and generated by the forenamed causes: for which we have describ'd that great multitude of men and women, converted unto Christ by the preaching and example of the Saints. But because in all natural things every motion is from one contrary to
ano-

Ch. 2. *the Christian Faith.* 13

another, there being found in every generation two contraries which combate together, between which, that which hath the greater force, overcomes: so Christ having in the spiritual generation overcome his adversaries with his elect: for this we have described all about the Triumph, the enemies of the church wholly overthrown. The four wheels of the chariot signifie the four parts of this voluble world, which Christ hath enlightened, and wonderfully subjected to himself. As Philosophers then having before their eyes the order of the Universe, and considering the wonderfull effects of nature, out of a desire to know them, in searching after their causes, and from inferiour things mount-

14 *The Truth of* Book I.
mounting up by little and little
to superiour, do come to the
knowledge of invisible things,
and of the divine Majestie; so if
we diligently search out the
things that Christ hath done,
and continually does in his
Church, figured in this Tri-
umph, we shall begin to won-
der and dive into their causes, and
by little and little we shall arrive
unto the knowledge of invisible
things, and of the divine Maje-
stie of Christ.

C H A P. III.

*Positions and principles which
are known and manifest.*

BUt to the end we may pro-
ceed orderly in this our Di-
spu-

Ch. 3. *the Christian Faith.* 15

sputation, we must know that it is needfull for the Disputants always to agree in some things, because if they should disagree in all, there would be no ground for dispute. Understand then that Disputants always agree in some principles, which are so manifest that no one can deny them; and sometimes further, in such things which are not so well known to all men. 'Tis needfull then we lay the foundation in some propositions that are most known, which being denied, we may well leave off to dispute, because he who denies things that are known, and the first principles, is a fool, and against such an one we ought not to dispute.

We will then, that our Adversaries

versaries first acknowledge with us, that Jesus Christ of Nazareth was crucified by the Jews, and afterwards worshipped as God by all the world as it were, according as he is at present by us Christians: This is manifest as well to unbelievers as believers; Jews, Hereticks, Mahumetans, Greeks, Latines, Barbarians, and all tongues confess this. Every man acknowledging this successively from generation to generation, even since Christs coming to this present hour. And the books writ in all languages, as well of Christians as their Adversaries, and divulged throughout the whole world, do further testifie this. Again, the ruins of divers Churches of Christ in several parts

Ch. 3. *the Christian Faith.* 17

parts of the world, are manifest memorials hereof; insomuch that there is not found as it were any place in the world, where Christ hath not been worshipped heretofore, or where he is not worshipped at present: whence it is that the Infidels call him the God of the Christians. If then it be a foolish thing to deny that which every language, and all books, and infinite memorials do testifie, he who shall denie Jesus Christ to have been crucified of the Jews, and worshipped, as it were in every part of the world as God, shall declare himself a fool, and such a one against whom no one ought to dispute. The same that is said of Christ may be said of the Christian doctrine likewise.

And

And by the like evidences it is known to every one, that the Apostles have preacht the cross of Christ, and before them were the people of the Jewes, the Patriarchs and Prophets, and after them the glorious Martyrs, and holy Fathers, and Doctors of the Church, and an infinite multitude of Christians of all sorts who have inviolably followed Christ.

And in like manner it is known that Tyrants, and the wisemen of this world have most cruelly fought against the Church, that the Romane Emperours have humbled and subjected themselves thereunto, and that Heretiques and their books have been refuted and reduced to nothing. I say then that these things

Ch.3. *the Christian Faith.* 19

things are so well known that they need no proof, and therefore we will presuppose them to be true; as Philosophers do the first principles in the sciences; because we do not think that men of sound understanding can deny such things; because to this present time not onely Christians do confess and acknowledge them, but likewise many other people and large Provinces, as the Indians, and withall the Mahumetans likewise, who are innumerable, are manifest proofs of the truth of the things aforesaid; who confess Christ to have reigned in those parts, and do honour him, punishing grievously those who blaspheme him, although otherwise they are intangled in many errours.

Which

Which things being so manifest, that we may teach them (as we may say) with the hand; no one but a fool, or he that is without shame, who with perverseness will avoid the truth, can deny them.

C H A P. IIII.

*Answers to the objections against
the foresaid Positions.*

BUt perhaps some one may say, if these things be true, it seems strange, that no Historian or heathen Oratour should have made any mention of them; especially since they have so diligently described the wars of Kings, and the works of great men, now the works of Christ being

Ch. 4. *the Christian Faith.* 21

being far more great and wonderfull, celebrated and published (as you say through the whole world) since they have past them over with silence, it may appear they are not true but fained. To this we answer and say, that it is false, that no heathen Historian hath writ of Christ and his Church, for innumerable most grave and learned men, both Greeks, Latines, Jews and other nations have not onely most copiously and elegantly writ the praises of Christ, but also have been converted to the faith, and have preached him in every place: whose books are every where published.

And if any reply; it is true they writ of Christ, after they became Christians, but we speak
of

of the Heathens who continued still in their infidelity. To this we say, they have by so much the more confirmed our faith, inasmuch as they have not onely writ the praises of Christ and his Church, but also leaving their errours, have not doubted to follow him, and to spend their blood for him: for not onely Christians brought up from their infancy in the faith, have writ of Christs works, but also innumerable most learned and excellent men of diverse languages, who in the maturity of their age were converted unto Christ. And this is the greatest argument for the truth of the things aforesaid, because they have much more demonstrated our faith to be true, seeing they have defended it

Ch.4. *the Christian Faith.* 23

it not onely with their pens, but with their works, and their own bloud, then if they had remained in their unbelief, and writ great volumes of the praises of Christ. What wonder is it if Infidels, stubborn and proud spirits, regarded not to write the magnificent works of Christ, when though they saw the miracles they would not embrace the faith?

We answer further, the heathen Historians have not writ the praises of Christ for two reasons chiefly; the one taken from Gods providence, and the other their own blindness. We beleeeve that God moves every thing corporeal and spiritual, and that his Providence rules over all, as we shall shew hereafter, and there-

therefore none can give himself to write any thing, unless he be thereunto moved by God, for the second cause cannot work unless it be moved by the first. When you ask therefore what this meanes that the heathen Historians have not writ of Christ; I answer, because the Providence of God did not move them hereunto, and that for three reasons. 1. Because this, proceeding orderly in every thing, useth always means suitable to its work; now the works of Christ and of the Church being most pure and divine, and the heathen Historians polluted with infidelity and other sins, God was not pleased to make use of such means so unsuitable to his end. 2. Christ being the
first

first truth, and coming into the world to bear witness to the truth, it did not become the divine providence to suffer such babblers and liars, as the heathen Oratours, Poets, and Historians are, to write the works and praises of Christ, who with so much flattery have commended the most wicked men, and have stuf't their books with falsities, wherewith likewise they would have contaminated the purest truth, if they had writ of Christ.

3. The heathen Oratours had no other eloquence then that of natural reason, by which they sought rather to magnifie themselves, then to tell the truth. Now the works of Christ being above all natural reason, 'tis manifest that such men were no

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con-

convenient means to be made use of in this work, and therefore the providence of God excluded them from it. The other cause wherefore they writ not the praises of Christ, was their own blindness, caused by their sins, especially that of pride and vain-glory, by which their sinfull heart was so darkened, that the works of Christ, (as the giving sight to the blind, raising of the dead, and the like, which none but God could do,) were of no esteem with them: and therefore being blind and senseless, they had no regard of them. And besides this, being brought up from their infancie in the fables and praises of their idols, they hated the Christians, because of the hatred they bore to their idol-worship:
and

Ch. 4. *the Christian Faith.* 27

and therefore how could such write any thing in praise of that Church, which they so much detested, all their study seeming to be lost, if idolatry should fail, and the Princes then, whom they desired onely to please, persecuting the Christians.

Again we must know, that such Poets and Oratours desiring always earthly things, sought after the favour of Princes and great ones, and in their verse and prose, with the greatest falsity, extoll'd them to the stars, to have some reward or temporal favour of them, which they could not then obtain with the Christians, the lovers of truth and poverty; 'tis no wonder then if in those times they did not write the praises of Christ, when no-

C 2

thing

thing was to be got. But now that the Church is possesse of temporal power, there is no want of Oratours and Poets to set forth the praises of Princes and Prelates, many times with much falsitie. It appears therefore by these reasons, that 'tis no marvell that the heathen Authors have not writ of the things of Christ.

C H A P. V.

Of the order of our proceeding.

SEeing then that we come to the knowledge of invisible things, by the things which are seen, we must understand, that there are some of the invisible things of God which we may know

know by the natural force of our understanding from the works of nature; as that God is, that he is one onely, a most simple substance, and the like : to the knowledge whereof Philosophers arive. There are other of the invisible things of God which we cannot search out by humane reason; whereat no one ought to wonder, for we see in men who are all equal by nature, that some Philosophers understand high and subtil things, the knowledge whereof children and men of mean capacitie cannot attain : how much more then ought we to beleieve, that there are infinite secrets in God, which no created understanding can search out : Since our knowledge is so little, and almost none

at all, in the things which everie day we handle, how much less must our knowledge be of God, who infinitely excells all other things? The things then of God which we cannot find out by natural reason, are those which we beleieve by faith; as that God is three and one, that Christ is God and man, and the like truths; which although they cannot be proved by natural effects and reasons, yet by supernatural effects we may much certifie our selves herein: for as by natural effects we know these propositions to be true, namely, that God is, that he is one and infinite; and nevertheless by these we do not therefore know how God is, nor see his substance; so by supernatural effects, we may be certified

Ch.5. *the Christian Faith.* 31

fied of the truth of these propositions, namely, that God is three and one, and that the Son of God is God and man, however by these we cannot comprehend, nor see this truth as it is in it self. Because then grace presupposeth nature, we will first treat of the invisible things of God, which may be sought out by natural effects: afterwards of those which may be known by supernatural effects: although we will treat of the first but briefly, because the Philosophers and Catholick Doctours have treated of them so sufficiently, that, in my opinion, there is no place left for any doubt.

CHAP. VI.

That God is.

First therefore, that all our proceeding may not be in vain, 'tis necessary to prove that God is: And because that in the naming of things, the common use is to be observed, we must first know what men understand by this name [*God*], who certainly hereby mean no other thing then that which is the most high, and the most excellent above all other things, which some call the first Mover, others the first Cause, and the first Principle, and others the chiefeest Good, and first Truth. But give God what name you please, so that you mean thereby that which all others do, namely, that
God

God is the most high, and the most excellent nature.

Most manifest it is by the demonstrations of Philosophers, that every one must needs confess that God is; some whereof to observe our order, we will briefly alledge. First, Philosophers most effectually prove, that every thing that is moved is moved by another. And although man, and every living creature moves it self, yet they say, that which moves is one thing, and that which is moved is another; because the soul moves, and the body is moved: whence it is that the body remains unmoveable when the soul is departed from it. And because every motion under heaven depends of the motion of the heaven, 'tis needfull

that some substance move that great body, because (as we have said) every thing that moves is moved by another. We demand then , whether that substance move, or no? If you say that it moves not, they conclude that it is God: because that by this name [God], all understand the first mover , who moves all other things, and himself is not moved. And if you say that it moves, they immediately conclude, it must needs then be moved by another. They demand then of that which moves it, if it move it self, or no: and if you say, no; by the reasons aforesaid they conclude it to be God: and if you say, it moves, they then reply, it is moved by another, and so of the other they make the same.

same demands, and conclude that you must either necessarily come to a first mover, or say that there are infinite things moving, whereof none is the first. But this is absurd in Philosophy, because not finding out the first, upon whose vertue all others depend; it follows, that either nothing should be moved, or the highest things should be without order. We must needs therefore grant a first mover, which we call God.

The like reasons they draw from the order of causes, because we see many things that are produc'd in this world, and it is not possible that any thing should make it self. Seeing then that many causes concur to the same effect, & that one is superiour to
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another ; either we must proceed *in infinitum*, which is most inconvenient, as we have said before concerning movers; or we must come to the first cause, which every man confesseth to be God.

Again, we see that in natural things one is better and perfecter then another, which could not be, but by reason of its greater appropinquation to the chiefest good, and highest perfection. We must needs grant therefore, that there is something which is highest in the world, and that can be no other then God.

Moreover, we see that natural things which are without understanding, proceed orderly from their beginning to their end by due means, which cannot be by chance, because they
do

Ch. 6. *the Christian Faith.* 37

do it always, or as it were always. This therefore must come from some understanding directing it, and that can be no other but God.

To these reasons we may add this evidence ; That no natural inclination can be in vain : since then we see all men inclin'd by nature to beleieve that there is a God ; because from the beginning of the world, even to this present hour, there was never any nation so barbarous and rude but confessed it, (as appears by their divers superstitions and sacrifices) we must needs say that it proceeds from a natural instinct.

And besides all this , we see that all men when they are in great dangers, and destitute of all humane

humane help, suddenly by a natural instinct look upward, and pray unto God for help. So that it appears to be naturally inserted in mens minds, that there is a God.

CHAP. VII.

That God is not a body, or the form of a body, or any compounded thing.

NO true Philosopher ever doubted that God is not a body, nor the form of a body, nor any compounded thing, but a pure act and simple substance: for God being the first mover, unmoveable, it is impossible he should be a body, because no body can move another, if it do not first

first move it self. And besides this, the spirit being more noble then the body; if God were a body, he could not be the most noble thing. Again the body being ruled by the spirit, if God were a body, he could not be the first ruler.

Nor can God be the form of a body, as the soul is the form of mans body; because every thing that hath its being by it self, is more noble then that which hath its being in another. God then being the most noble above every thing, hath his being in himself, and not in any body. Besides, things compounded of matter and form, are more perfect then the matter or the form alone; because the whole always is more perfect then any of its parts;

parts; if God then should be the form of a body, some thing would be more perfect then God; because all that *compositum* would be more perfect then its form. Again, it would follow, that God could not work of himself, because the form, as it hath not its being without the matter, so neither can it work without it. God then would not be the first cause, which needs no other in its working.

Moreover, it is manifest that God is not a compounded thing, but a pure act and simple substance, because every compounded thing depends of another, as we see compounded bodies do of simple: God then being the first cause, not depending of any other, but all things depending
upon.

Ch.7. *the Christian Faith.* 41

upon him; it follows, that he is no compounded thing, but a pure act. Furthermore, if God were a compounded thing, it would follow, that he were not the first and principal thing of the world; because the *compositum* always follows the parts, and is not before them, which cannot be united, unless by some cause which precedes the whole. We must therefore conclude, that God is a simple substance, and a pure act.

CHAP. VIII.

That God is perfect, the chiefest good, an infinite power, in every place, immutable, eternal.

IF we confess (as necessarily we must) that God is a pure act,

act, we are further constrained to say, that he is perfect, the chiefest good, an infinite power, in every place, immutable and eternal, because every immaterial thing, by how much it is more simple, by so much it is more perfect: God then being a pure act, without all composition, and in the highest degree of simplicitie, we must needs say, that he hath the greatest goodness and perfection.

And because every thing, by how much it is more elevated from matter, by so much it is of greater vertue and power: God being the most elevated from all imperfection, and in the highest degree of abstraction from materiality; he must necessarily be infinite, and of infinite power.

And

Ch.8. *the Christian Faith.* 43

And because as particular effects are reduced to particular causes, so universal effects to universal causes; the being of things, being an universal effect, because common to all things, must then necessarily proceed from an universal cause, which is God, who is not onely the cause in the giving of this being, but in the preserving of it.

And because that 'tis necessary, that when the cause works, it conjoyn its vertue with the effect; God being his own vertue must necessarily be conjoyn'd to the being of all things: and therefore we must needs say, that he is intimately in all things, because the being is more intimate to nature then any thing that is. And God being indivisible, he must
needs

44 *The Truth of* Book I,
needs be all in all the universe,
and all in every part of it.

Further, we must needs confess that he is immutable and eternal, because every thing that changes must needs have some composition, as all Philosophers prove: there being then no composition in God, because he is a pure act, neither can there be any change in him. And therefore he must needs be eternal likewise; for if he were not eternal he would be mutable, because he would either have beginning or end; if he had a beginning he would not be God, but that which is his beginning; and if he had an end, his being would depend of another, and so he would not be the first cause.

CHAP,

CHAP. IX.

That God is One.

Moreover, that there is one God and no more, is manifestly proved, because the divine nature being most simple, cannot be communicated to others; for we see that every nature that is communicated to more individuals, suffers composition, especially because it must needs suffer diversitie of being; and therefore 'tis impossible that more things should have the divine nature. Again, if there were more Gods, 'tis necessary they should be different one from another. That then which should make them to differ, must either be something that is perfect or imperfect; if imperfect, he that hath

hath it would not be God, because God is altogether perfect; and if perfect, he that hath it not, would not be God for the same reason. 'Tis impossible then there should be more Gods.

Further, we see that all things in the world are ordered in the best manner, all which could not agree in one order, if they were not disposed by one; for we see that diverse things are better reduc'd to one order by one, then more.

And again, we see in natural things wherein there appears any government, as in Bees, and Cranes; and the faculties of the soul, that the multitude is regulated by one; and because art follows nature, we see that all good governments are finally devol-

Ch. 10. *the Christian Faith.* 47
devolved to one, otherwise the
parts would be dissolv'd, and the
government could not stand.
The government then of the
world, being amongst others the
first and most perfect; we must
needs say, that there is one one-
ly Prince and Governour in it,
who is God.

CHAP. X.

*That God knows perfectly every
thing, and that he works by his
own will, and not by necessitie
of Nature.*

WE may understand from
the things aforesaid,
that there is a perfect knowledge
in God : for we see in natural
things, that those which have
know-

knowledge, have their natures more ample and extended then those which have not; because they are not onely informed by their proper form, but they receive likewise the form of other things in their intellectual facultie; and this happens to them, because their nature is more elevated from the matter. Whence we deduce, that every intellectual form, by how much it is more elevated from the matter, by so much it is of a more ample and perfect knowledge. God then being a pure act, that is elevated from all matter & passibilitie; it follows, that he is in the highest degree of knowledge, and that his understanding extends it self to every thing. And for this very reason we may understand, that

Ch. 10. *the Christian Faith:* 49

that God knows not as men do, namely, by receiving the similitudes of things in their understanding; but God being a simple substance, we must needs say that his wisdom, and his understanding are his nature, and he is wisdom it self; which being simple and not distinguished in parts, must needs comprehend every thing by it self. And because the vertue of God is no other then God himself, and divine wisdom it self; we must needs say, that the wisdom of God comprehends all his power. And because the divine power extends it self to infinite things, we must necessarily conclude, that God knows infinite things; for no one can perfectly know any one vertue or power, unless he perfectly

D

fectly

fectly know all that it can do. And therefore the opinion of those is foolish, who say, that God knows the things above determinately; but the particular things which are done upō earth, in an universal manner and confusedly. Certainly it is ridiculous to affirm, that man knows that which God doth not; or that man knows any thing more perfectly then God does. If man therefore knows these particular things distinctly, who then but a fool will say, that God knows these things after an universal manner and confusedly? especially since we see that in natural things, by how much any vertue or power is more eminent or more perfect, by so much it extends it self to more things,
and

Ch. 10. *the Christian Faith.* 51

and is more penetrative: as we see that mens wits the more elevated they are, the more things they reach, and penetrate them the more subtilly. The divine understanding therefore being of infinite perfection and eminence, must needs penetrate every thing most profoundly: And being immutable and eternal, we are constrained to confess, that it always hath, and always doth, and ever will know after the same manner, not onely what is present and to come; but also all those things which God can do, and never will do, which are infinitely infinite.

Furthermore, we affirm, that that which God does, he does it not by necessity of nature, but by his understanding & will: For

D 2 seeing

seeing that nature proceeds orderly in its works, not having any knowledge; we must needs say that it is ordered by some superiour understanding; because order is a thing that appertains to the understanding, and therefore it is necessary that the understanding ordering, be before the nature ordered. Since God therefore is the original of every thing, we must needs say, that he works not by necessity of nature, but by his understanding and will.

Again, we see that that which works by necessity of nature, is drawn by a natural force to make the effect as like it self as it can. God then being of an infinite power, if he were drawn to work by force of nature, either he
would

would make all things infinite, which is impossible; or things being not able to receive such a power, nothing at all would be made. And therefore we say, That God works all things accordingly as they are in himself, as in the cause. Seeing then that all things are in his understanding, as the house is in the mind of the builder, which he intends to make; as the builder by his understanding and free-wil builds the house; so does God likewise by his understanding and free-wil effect all things.

C H A P. X I.

*That Gods providence rules
over all.*

That then which we have
above-said being true, no

D 3 one

one can doubt but God hath a care and providence of all things, even of the least, not onely such as are natural, but humane likewise; because providence is nothing else then the knowledge of the order of things, with a purpose to bring them to their end by due means. God then working in all things as the first cause, by his understanding determined by his free-will, and he being the chiefeſt wiſdome, to whom it belongs to diſpoſe and rightly to order all things, we muſt needs ſay, that there is a perfect providence in God of all things. Philoſophers therefore ſeeing that there is a wonderfull order in the works of nature, conceiv'd it would be a fooliſh thing to ſay, that the divine providence

Ch. II. *the Christian Faith.* 55

vidence extended not to natural things; all their doubt was about humane things, wherein there appears so great disorder and confusion. Whence some of them said, that Gods providence was not conversant about these. But if we diligently consider it, we shall find that it is no less foolish to exclude Gods providence from humane, then from natural things; because we see, that by how much all things are more noble, by so much they are more ordinate: for the good of the universe consists in the order of these. Man therefore being the most noble creature, if the works of nature fall under the divine providence, much more must those of man do.

Again, we see that those who

D 4 wise-

wisely fore-cast and fore-see, have a greater care and providence of those things which are nearer the end, then of such as are more remote : Man therefore being nearer to God, (who is the end of all things) then natural things, which are ordained for man as their end : no one can reasonably imagine, that Gods providence is conversant about these, and not about man.

Moreover, the government of the divine providence proceeds from the divine love, by which God loves the things that depend on him : and therefore his providence is the greater over those things he loves more. If then no man can doubt but God loves man more then natural things, having given him a more
per-

Ch. II. *the Christian Faith.* 57

perfect nature, and better operations then to these, who can doubt but if his providence be exercised about these, much more is it about humane affairs.

Again, we see that it is a most natural thing for all causes, to have a certain providence over their effects, and to endeavour to conduct them to their end by due means; as is seen in all creatures, who have the greatest care over their young ones: Seeing then that all second causes in their operations labour to bear a likeness to the first, 'tis a manifest signe that the first cause, which is God, hath a providence over all his effects, which are all the things in the world: Especially in that such a care and providence which the cause hath over its

D 5 effect,

effect, proceeds from the goodness of the cause. Now God being the chiefest good, it follows that his providence must be the greatest over every thing, and especially over humane things, Since man is the most noble effect, and more beloved of him then natural things.

Furthermore, if God have not a providence and care of man it must be either because he cannot, or knows not, nor will not. 'Tis foolish to say he cannot, because his power is infinite. And no less foolish to say he knows not, having knowledge of all things. And to say he will not, is to derogate from his goodness; because no good man despiseth his work, nor no good thing its effect. Nor is it rightly done,

done, to provide for imperfect things, and not for those which are perfect: and if every man of excellent goodness and wisdom hath the most diligent care and providence, as much as in him lies, over humane things; how much more then must God have, who infinitely excels all in goodness?

CHAP. XII.

Of the end of man, to which he is directed by the divine providence.

ANd because it belongs to providence to move those things that are subject to it to their end by due means, whilst they have divers near ends, 'tis
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necessary also they have divers means to attain them. And therefore irrational things are moved by God to their end by natural instinct, rather conducted and led by others, then governed by themselves. But man, who hath free-will, may have a providence over himself; and therefore is so moved by God to his end, that he moves himself also, working together with God. It belongs therefore to man to search out his ultimate end, to which he is ordained by the divine providence, and the means to attain it, and that with all care and diligence; that he may order all his life conformably to the divine providence. Which Philosophers with the greatest diligence have endeavoured

Ch. 12. *the Christian Faith.* 61

voured to find out, and as nature proceeds from that which is imperfect to what is perfect, so the first Philosophers imperfectly discovered the aforesaid end; but others more excellent succeeding them, have with many strong reasons defined the end of mans life, to be the contemplation of divine things: because this alone is the proper operation of man, and is not ordained to any other thing as its end, but is desired for it self, and conjoyns man to God, to which man finds that sufficiency in himself, that for this he hath need of few outward things. And briefly, this is the end of all things which belong to man: because all natural things are ordained for mans body, and the body for the soul, and
all

all the faculties of the soul serve for this contemplation; whereunto is required a rest from all perturbations and passions, to which rest and quiet all civil government is ordained, wherein all arts are included. And therefore 'tis manifest, that all natural and artificial things are ordained to this contemplation as their ultimate end. Whereunto the divine providence by moral vertue moves all men, and that always freely, because they have free-will. And therefore if they shall consent to the motion of divine providence, without doubt, by due means, they will come to their desired end.

CHAP. XIII.

*That the ultimate end of man is not
in this present life.*

BUT if we consider these things exactly, we shall find it difficult, yea impossible to attain our ultimate end in this present life; because blessedness being the ultimate perfection of man, 'tis not every contemplation of divine things that makes a man blessed: but that which is perfect, as far (at least) as mans condition is capable of such perfection. Now to this perfect contemplation very few, perhaps none at all, can arrive in this present life, because it requires the highest degree of knowledge, which the greater part of men cannot reach unto; some by reason
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son of the evil disposition of their body, and of their inward senses, which the soul useth as the instruments of knowledge, being so ill disposed that they can hardly understand those things which are most manifest. Others are hindred from this study, by the care of their domestick or civil affairs, and by many other humane necessities, whereby they are withdrawn, so that there are very few who dedicate themselves to this contemplation, whereunto though they should be wholly addicted, they could not (till after a long time at least) attain the perfection of this knowledge; because they must know many other things as precedent hereunto, and that such a purity of heart, and
so

Ch. 13. *the Christian Faith.* 65

so great a quiet from the passions, with the possession of all moral vertues, is required to this contemplation; that hardly can be acquired by those who diligently exercise themselves herein, no not in their old age. There being then so great a multitude of youth in the world, few whereof can give themselves to the contemplation of truth, it follows that very few, yea, even none at all can attain to this blessedness.

And certainly, we shall find no less a defect, if we consider more subtilly the infirmity of mans understanding, which is many ways deceived in the knowledge of natural things, how much more then in divine things. For many times it is couselened by the
sense,

sense, where all our knowledge begins : as when the eye sees the sun as a little sphere, whereas it is greater then all the earth ; and moreover , the imagination so far over-clouds the understanding of some, that they cannot beleieve there are any other things save those which are corporeal.

Furthermore , we are many times deceived by the inordinate discourse of our understanding, thinking false and sophistical reasons , to be true and demonstrative, as is seen in the variety of the opinions of many great men. Besides, the passions and divers affections of the soul, and mens evil customes, do much hinder the understanding : And if these things do so much envelop

Ch. 13. *the Christian Faith.* 67

lop our understanding, that it acquires little knowledge of natural things; how much less will it have of those which are divine.

All which diligently considered, shews that very few can attain unto blessedness, if it were attainable in this life; because we must exclude from it children, young men, women, and all those who are not capable of this science, and likewise all those who are occupied in the government of humane affairs; & finally, the whole race of mankind will fall short of their blessedness, which would be very absurd, since blessedness is the end of mans life, and so must indifferently agree to all men.

And if we yet consider this
matter

matter more diligently, we shall find that it is impossible for a man to be blessed in this present life; because blessedness, being the chiefest good of man, does not suffer with it any evil; and that this being once acquired, there remains nothing more for man to desire, because that every other good thing comes with the chiefest good. Now what man is there in this life, who hath not need of some thing, who is free and secure from all evil? our nature being so liable and subject to so many misfortunes? whence it falls out many times, that those who have been reputed most happy, as *Pyramus* and others, have been intercepted with great calamities, as daily experience shews,

But

Ch. 13. *the Christian faith.* 69

But admit however, that some one should attain the perfect contemplation of divine things, as far as concerns the sufferings of this present life, so as to be exempted from them, and enjoy what is good, yet we cannot see how such an one can be truly called happy. First, because blessedness being that which gives rest to the heart of man, and every one desiring naturally to know, how can the heart of man be at rest, seeing there are so many things which men desire still to know, the most excellent Philosophers who have been from the beginning of the world even to this time, and imployed themselves in searching out the secrets of nature, confessing there were more things they understood
not

not, then those which they understood; and further, that they had no perfect knowledge of the things which they knew. If then our understanding fail so much in the knowledge of natural things, how much more infinitely will it in those which are supernatural and divine. Whence it appears, that a little knowledge will not quiet the heart of man, since it always desires to know; yea, the more any shall know God, by so much he will the more desire to have perfect knowledge of him: because every natural motion is more swift in the end then in the beginning. Seeing then that we cannot attain the perfect knowledge of God in this life, it follows, that no one in this life can be truly blessed. And

Ch.13. *the Christian Faith.* 71

And again, admit that a man could come to the perfect knowledge of things natural and divine, it does not appear yet by this, that he can be truly blessed in this life ; because he does not arrive to this knowledge, but in his old age , when he is near to death; and if he should arrive to it in his youth, he cannot for all this avoid death, which may seize upon him every hour. Now the desire to live always, being most natural to all, (whence it is that every one seeks to make himself immortal, either in the begetting of children , or other excellent works ,) if there be no other life but this, the wiseman , and he whom we have here set down for the blessed man, cannot but much afflict himself, I say not because
of

of the presence, but because of the remembrance of death. For, how can the wiseman who vehemently loves the perfect life, but exceedingly hate that which destroys it. Especially having acquired such a life after a long time, with great labour and pains. Nor can we say that such an one does not think of death, for this belongs not to wisemen, but to such as live without reason. Certainly no one will call that man blessed, who all the time of his life hath laboured to acquire that felicitie which he cannot retain, and whereof he is uncertain whether he shall have a good or a bad end, being as yet subject to the divers events of this wicked world.

It appears then by the reasons
above-

Ch. 13. *the Christian Faith.* 73

abovesaid, that if there be no other life but this, there is nothing more unhappy, and more miserable then man; because all other things guided by nature, attain their ends with very little difficulty, but man being compassed about with infinite perturbations and troubles, either cannot find his end, or if he find it after many years and much labour, when he hath once attained it, cannot retain it. And how absurd this is in the most noble creature which the world affords, every simple man may easily judge.

CHAP. XIV.

That the soul of man is immortal.

IF we therefore rightly consider the precedent reasons, we
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cannot beleeeve that there is not another world, and that the soul of man is not immortal: for Gods providence ruling over humane things, to which it appertains to conduct every thing to its end; if the end of man be not in this present life, we must needs allow another life in which he may attain his blessedness, otherwise we could not understand how Gods providence should govern humane affairs. Certainly all reason concludes, that there must be something which is immortal in man, because the operations of the understanding cānot proceed from any corporeal power, in regard they extend themselves beyond all corporeal things, and joyn even to God. And this reason hath constrain'd Philosophers

Ch. 14. *the Christian Faith.* 75

phers to confesse, that in man there is something which is immortal and immaterial.

But because it is very hard to understand how an immaterial substance can be the form of a body, their opinions have been divers concerning this immortal thing which is in man, called the understanding; but that this is the intellective soul, the form of mans body, no one can rationally deny; because every one confesseth, that man is distinguished from other creatures, in regard that he is rational and they irrational, which could not be true, if the reasonable soul were not the form of man: for all the distinction of one kind of creatures from another, proceeds from the form.

E 2 , Again,

Again, every one confesseth, that the most proper and excellent operation of man, is to understand and reason; we must therefore needs say, that man is the principle of this operation. Now man being compounded of matter and form, we cannot say that he is the principle of this operation by vertue of the matter; but by vertue of the form only, which can be no other then the intellective soul, the intellective soul therefore is the form of man.

Again, we see that man moves himself as other living creatures do: Seeing then that other living creatures move their own bodie, by vertue of their form which is their soul; it follows that man also moves himself by vertue of
his

his soul. Now we prove by experience, that the understanding and the will govern the whole man, we must therefore needs say, that the intellective and volitive soul is the form of man.

Moreover, if the rational soul be not the form of man, we cannot understand how a childe, which yet hath not the operation of the understanding, should be a man; nor how a man can be said to understand when he useth reason: for if the rational substance be not the form of man, but subsist of it self, certainly 'tis that thing which so subsists, and not man that hath the operation of understanding, unless perhaps you will say with *Plato*, that man is not a thing com-

pounded of soul and body, but that the soul alone is man, joyn'd to the body, as the mover to that which is moveable, and that this alone is that which understands and works. But whoever shall hold this opinion, will not be able to avoid many inconveniencies. First, it will follow, if the soul be the whole man excluding the body, that man is not sensible, and that when the soul shall depart from the body, that bodie shall remain as perfect as at first; because we see that the substance of the thing that moves, alters not when the mover departs from it. And so it follows, that the body of man does not live by the intellectuall soul, nor is man generated by its conjunction to him, because no-
thing

Ch. 14. *the Christian Faith.* 79

thing that is moveable is generated by having the mover joyned to it; and so all generation of man would cease, because the soul, according to *Plato*, is not generated. The body of man then being not man, it follows, that no man begets another, because (according to them) neither the body which is begotten, is man, nor yet the body and soul united, but the soul alone which is not generated; so that in the generation of man, there shall be neither fathers nor children.

These and innumerable the like absurdities fall upon them, who will not confess that that thing which in man is intellective (which by force of reason we are compelled to say is im-

mortal) is the form of mans body. Seeing therefore that they which say, the intellective soul is the form of the body, free themselves from all these difficulties, and do easily solve all contrary arguments, 'tis manifest that their opinion is the truest.

The intellective soul then being the highest amongst all natural and material forms, by reason of its perfection, partakes of the nature of incorporeal and immaterial substances, because the mean always participates of the extremes. And therefore inas-much as it partakes of the nature of inferiour forms, so far we say it is the form of mans body; but as to its ultimate perfection, wherein it resembles immaterial forms, it is separated from the
bo-

Ch. 14. *the Christian Faith.* 85

body in such manner, that the intellective part is not joyn'd to any corporeal organ, as the other sensitive faculties are; and therefore by some it is called, the tie or knot of the world, because it conjoyns the lowest and the highest things together.

Since therefore no one can rationally say otherwise, we must needs confess the rational soul to be the form of man, and notwithstanding it is the form of the body, yet withall we must affirm likewise, that 'tis incorruptible, because every intellectual substance is incorruptible, and cannot be otherwise for many reasons. First, because every perfection must needs be proportioned to the thing whereof it is the perfection; seeing then that uni-

verfal and incorruptible things, and eſpecially God, in contemplation of whom conſiſts the ſouls bleſſedneſs, is the perfection of the ſoul; we muſt needs ſay that it is incorruptible. Secondly, we ſee the ſoul of man to become more perfect, by how much it is more abſtracted from corporeal, and elevated to incorporeal and divine things: 'tis a folly therefore to ſay, that the ſoul is corrupted in its ſeparation from the body; becauſe it would follow, that its ſeparation from the body, were together its perfection and deſtruction. And if any one ſhould ſay, that its perfection proceeds from its abſtraction from the body, by the operation of the underſtanding; but its corruption comes from its ſeparation
on.

on from the body by the means of its being; this answer is vain, because the proper operation follows the nature, and therefore 'tis impossible, that when the operation becomes perfect, the nature should become imperfect and corrupt it self. 'Tis therefore against all reason to say, that the intellective soul is corrupted when it is separated from the body. And this the natural inclinations of all men do further demonstrate: by vertue whereof they have always been most solicitous of that which hath a being after death, and no one hath been ever able to confirm himself in this perswasion, that there is not another life after this, which the continual enquiries of Philosophers, who have very
much

much searched after this matter, demonstrates ; whereof Poets and Oratours, both learned and unlearned have writ diversthings, for the great desire they have to understand this point: which desire would be vainly fixed in man, if the intellective soul were mortal ; because it would be not onely unprofitable , but very prejudicial to man, by reason of the sadness, and many other fantasies that it would produce. But if we grant the intellective soul to be immortal; it follows , that this natural desire is not vain , but very usefull and necessary , because it stirs up a man to think of another life, and to aim at his true blessedness.

It appears therefore (as we have

Ch. 14. *the Christian Faith.* 85
have said) that whoever affirms
the intellectuall soul not to be
the form of the body, or that it
is not immortal, intangles him-
self in many snares: for besides
that which we have said, 'tis
hard, yea impossible, to under-
stand upon such assertion, how
a man is a reasonable creature, or
hath free-will, and how he may
be justly punished by the laws
when he offends, and what is his
end, and the providence of God
concerning him. These and the
like absurdities which they in-
cur, would be too large for us to
describe in this our work: all
which they avoid, who affirm the
intellectuall soul to be the form
of the body, and immortal. But
because the discourse of the other
life, to which the soul passeth
when

when it departs from the body, exceeds the faculty of our natural reason, we will here end our first book, that we may come the sooner to the supernatural things of faith: for where natural reason fails, there faith begins : which if in the following book we shall prove to be true, there will remain no doubt of the immortality of the soul.

Preface



Preface to the II Book
 shewing the order of
 proceeding,

HAVING treated in the first Book of the things to which natural reason reacheth, as far as we thought sufficient to our purpose; it remains that we now convert our discourse to those things which exceed natural reason, that we may demonstrate the Christian faith to be most true, as by natural workes; so likewise by the supernatural deeds of Christ. And because the things present which are before our eyes have more belief and certainty then those things which are past, we will first ground
 the

*the reasons of our Faith upon the
 works which we see continually to be
 done by Christians in the Church.
 I speak not now of those which are
 bad, who by reason of their evil
 life are rather cut off from the body
 of the Church, then can be truly
 said to be in the Church, but of
 those who are good, who are Chri-
 stians not onely in name but indeed.
 Afterwards we will set down the
 reasons grounded upon the works
 of Christ, done by him in times
 past, and which are well known to
 all the world, notwithstanding the
 things which are present give cre-
 dit likewise to those which are past.
 And because the principal effect to
 which every good institution of the
 Church is ordained is the good life
 of Christians, our Saviour saying,
 I am come to give life to my elect
 and*

and to give it them more perfectly. First, We will prove the faith of Christ to be true by reasons grounded upon this good life. Secondly, By reasons grounded upon the cause thereof. Thirdly, By reasons grounded upon its effects, wherein we will comprehend as it were every thing which is done at present in the militant Church.

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAP. I.

That there is some true Religion in the world.



That we may joyn what goes before with that which follows after, we must needs confess,

fess, that there is some Religion, or divine, holy, and true worship in the world. Now we call Religion or worship, a due honour given to God, as the Universal, Principal Governour, and End of every thing. We see every effect naturally converts it self to its cause, & submits it self to it, to be made like it, as it were calling upon it, and praying to it, to have a care of it: which thing appears to be no other, then to give worship and honour to its cause. Man therefore being the effect of God, it follows, that there must be a natural instinct in him to convert himself unto God, and to submit himself to him, and to become like to him, and to call upon him, to obtain his blessedness: all which are the works of
Reli-

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Religion and Divine worship. There being then no natural inclination in vain, we must necessarily grant, that God hath given some true religion to men, otherwise this natural inclination would be vain.

This again is confirmed by another reason, because man being a reasonable creature, and having free-will and reason, failing in many things, and especially in those which are divine, if God had not shewed some true religion, man would still wander; and want the means of attaining his blessedness, as the Pagans did before Christ came: and so it would follow, that that natural instinct of his were vain, and that the providence of God were wanting to man in that which is neces-

necessary to his salvation. Now that the divine worship is naturally implanted in man, is manifest by this, that in every generation of men, as well past as present, this worship hath always been. If therefore this natural inclination were vain, God should have better provided for irrational creatures then for man.

Moreover, every cause naturally transfuseth its goodness and perfection to its effect, that as far as it is capable it may be like it. God therefore being the first cause of every thing, and the chiefest good, seeks more then other causes to infuse his goodness into man, and to bring him to blessedness. The inward worship of the minde therefore, by which a man submits himself unto

to

to God, being the perfection of man, 'tis manifest that God hath not altogether depriv'd man of this worship. We must therefore needs say, that there is some true worship in the world.

CHAP. II.

That there is an inward and an outward worship.

ANd because God may be honoured by man two ways, with the body, and with the spirit; we say, that the one worship is inward, and the other outward. The inward worship is exhibited to God with the understanding and will; the outward by corporeal duties, ceremonies and sacrifices. The inward worship

ship properly is the rectitude of the heart towards God, and the perfection of mans life, which we prove thus.

The divine worship principally is ordained to the honour of God, but man cannot more honour God, then by the perfection of his life: for every effect honours the cause, especially in its perfection; as we see artificers by the perfection of their works, to acquire the greatest honour and glory: therefore seeing there is no effect in this world more worthy then man, none can more honour God then man does; and by how much his life is more perfect, by so much he does more honour God. So that it is evident, the greatest honour that man can exhibite unto God, is the

Ch. 2. *the Christian Faith.* 95

the perfection of his life, and consequently, this is the true and perfect divine worship.

Again, we worship God not onely to honour him, but likewise to receive blessedness from him; whence it appears, that the worship of God is a disposition and means whereby to come to our last end. A good life therefore being a better mean to attain blessedness, then sacrifice or ceremonies, we must needs say, that it is the better and truer way to worship God.

Moreover, God being not a bodie, but a pure act, 'tis certain that man renders him more perfect worship by the purity of heart, then by any outward act: because God is a spirit, & he that worships God, must worship him in spirit and in truth. CHAP.

CHAP. III.

*That the Christian life is the best
that can be found.*

SEeing then that the divine
worship consists in the per-
fection of mans life, and that we
can neither find, nor think of a-
ny better life then that of a Chri-
stian; it follows, that we can nei-
ther find or think of any better
religion then the Christian reli-
gion. And that the Christian life
is the best that can be found or
thought of, will be easily proved
by discoursing upon the several
degrees of life.

Most certain it is, that the life
of animals is more perfect then
that of plants; and amongst ani-
mals there are divers degrees of
life, one more perfect then an-
other.

other. And because an animal is a sensitive substance, they amongst animals that partake more of sensible knowledge, are in a more perfect degree of life. Seeing then that intellective knowledge exceeds sensitive, 'tis certain that there is a more perfect degree of life in men, then in other living creatures. Furthermore, in men there are divers degrees of life, not as to the nature, but the perfection of life; because man being a reasonable creature, those who live more according to reason, have a more perfect degree of life: for he that lives not according to reason, is rather a beast then a man. And again, there are divers degrees amongst them who live according to reason: for the whole rational

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onal life being ordained to the contemplation of eternal things, by how much any abandoning these earthly things, does by love and contemplation the more joyn himself to eternal things, by so much he partakes of a more perfect degree of life. Seeing then that the Christian life wholly consists, not onely in alienating our selves from these temporal things, but likewise from all self-love, and in approaching to God, by love and contemplation to become altogether like him, & as much as is possible, the same thing with him: it appears manifestly, that the Christian life is the best we can find or think of.

Again, (as is above-said) by how much a man more follow-
eth

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eth reason, by so much he partakes of a more perfect degree of life; seeing then that the Christian life does neither do nor suffer any thing, no not the least, which is contrary to reason, but wholly submits it self to the laws of God; 'tis manifest that no other life can excell it. Moreover, the good life of man is ordained to the contemplation of divine things as its end, to which there is required the greatest purity of heart. Seeing then that no one hath found nor yet can find a more perfect purgation, nor a more divine contemplation then the Christian is, it follows; that no better life can be found then the Christian life.

CHAP. IIII.

That no one can find or think of any better end, then that to which the Christian life is ordained.

BUt that we may the better demonstrate that the Christian life is the best which can be found, we will prove that no one can find, neither a better end, and more consonant to reason, nor yet better means to attain that end, then those which the Christian religion teacheth. And this being proved, we shall have our intent, because the good life hath all its perfection from the end and the means to attain it.

As to the end then it is manifest; because the end of the Christian life is God, and the vision

vision and fruition of God himself. There being then no end more excellent then God, 'tis certain there can be no better end then that which the Christian religion teacheth as to this part. And as to that of his vision and fruition, 'tis manifest, because the Christian religion does not make the end of mans life to be the vision and fruition of God, as acquired by means of the creature, but that whereby God is embraced and seen face to face, then which none can be better.

And that this open vision and fruition of God is the end of mans life, we may prove by manifest reasons. First, because we having proved above, that the blessedness of man cannot be in this present life, and that there-

fore it must needs be in the other life; unless we will have man to be made in vain, if in the other life man should have no other happiness, but to contemplate God by means of the creatures, though we should admit he knew them all, as well those that are spiritual as corporeal; it does not yet by this appear, (the blessedness of man consisting in the rest and quiet of his heart) how the heart of man should obtain rest and happiness; because he shall have either perfect or imperfect knowledge of the creatures: if imperfect, how can this give rest and quiet, because every imperfect thing desires its perfection, and cannot rest till it be obtain'd. If perfect, then he will see, that they depend upon some cause, and

Ch. 4. *the Christian Faith.* 103

and therefore he will naturally desire to know, what that is, for it is most natural to man, when he hath seen the effect, to desire the knowledge of the cause, and never to rest till he find it; and by how much his knowledge increaseth, by so much he desireth the more vehemently to know it; as a heavy thing, by how much 'tis more perfect in heaviness, by so much it falls to the centre with a greater vehemence. Man being then the more perfect and blessed, by how much he makes the greater increase in the knowledge of divine things; and the desire of the more perfect knowledge of these increasing in him, by how much he knows them the more, 'tis certain that the motion of mans heart will never

F 4 cease,

cease, till it come even to touch its ultimate end, which can be no other then God: for we see by experience, that the heart of man cannot be fill'd and satisfied with any finite thing.

Our understanding is more ample then all finite things; for there is nothing that it knows, but by its capacity it exceeds, being capable still to understand more things, by how much it is more knowing. Every thing therefore beneath God being finite, and our understanding being capable of infinite things, there being no number so great but it may add thereunto without end, we must needs say, that there is no creature which can fill the tenth part of the capacity of mans heart. It is not then onely
reaso-

Ch.4. *the Christian Faith.* 105

reasonable, but likewise necessary to confess, that the blessedness of man consists in the vision of God; who onely is infinite, and greater then mans heart.

Certainly, according to all Philosophy, every natural motion tends to some end, which when the moveable body obtains, it rests it self, there being then no other term of mans desire then God; we must needs define him to be the end and repose of mans nature, whereunto when man shall arive, there remains no other thing for him to desire; because he will repute all other things as nothing unto God, there being no comparison of a finite thing to an infinite: and because that all perfection which is in the world, is much

more excellently in God, as in the cause. And therefore having God, he shall have every other thing ; for the understanding knowing God; shall much better know all other creatures. Though an excellent sensible object destroys the sense, nevertheless an excellent intelligible object does not destroy, but perfect the understanding. But we must know, that God being infinite, and not computed amongst the order of created things, our understanding cannot come to his vision by vertue of its natural light , because nothing can work out of the order of its nature; but our understanding being apt by its proper nature, to extend it self to infinite things , may be elevated by the divine power to see that, which

Ch. 5. *the Christian faith.* 107
which by its own force it could
not see.

We say then, that the blessedness of man consists in the vision of God, to which he is elevated by a certain supernatural light, which our Divines call the light of glory; whereby again it appears, that no end of mans life can be found or imagined to be better then that which the Christian religion teacheth.

CHAP. V.

*That there can be found no better
mean to attain this blessedness
then the Christian life.*

Furthermore, we shall easily
prove, that rationally no one
can assigne any better mean. to
at-

attain the fore-said end, if we shall first demonstrate it to be necessary, that a man must have some mean to attain it. And this appears, because God doing nothing that is vain in nature, we cannot say that man is ordained to blessedness, and that withall there is not some means appointed to attain it, in vain. should a man have the motive faculty, if he had not therewith all members to move. Man therefore having some mean to come to his blessedness, the Christian religion saith, that this is purity of heart, with grace infused supernaturally, together with all the vertues. Now how true and rational this is, is easily proved, because tis requisite that the means be proportioned to the end, The
end.

Ch.5. *the Christian Faith*, 109

end of man then being the supernatural vision of God, who is the highest intelligible object; without doubt the most perfect purity of heart is hereunto required, which consists in the separation of the understanding and affection from the love of corporeal things, and their conjunction to things incorporeal and divine, that being called pure which is not mingled with any thing inferior to it. Which purity the Christian religion does much more excellently teach, then the most excellent Philosophers have done; because whatever they do rightly define concerning this, is taught also by the Christian religion, which superadds much more perfect instructions, demonstrating further,

ther, that the purity of mans heart taught by Philosophers to be acquired by natural vertue, is not a sufficient mean to come to the end whereof we have spoken above ; because nothing can come to that which exceeds the terms of its nature, as God does, unless by a power granted from some superiour cause: as the water by its own force cannot raise it self on high. And therefore Christians do rationally say, that the purity of the heart informed by grace, and supernatural vertue, is the true means to attain blessedness, which we might prove by many reasons, if I had not already largely done it in our little book, *Of the simplicity of the Christian life*, wherein we have demonstrated, that simplicity

Ch.5. *the Christian Faith.* III

plicity and purity of heart, and all the Christian life, proceeds not from natural love, nor from the imagination, nor from humane reason, nor from the influence of the heaven, nor from any spiritual creature; but onely from God, by the infusion of supernatural grace. Not to repeat therefore that which is there said, whoever will may reade that book, and he shall understand, that the Christian life is the most perfect mean to attain the fore-said end. Whence it follows, that there is no better way to come to blessedness then the Christian life, wherein every perfection of good life, as well natural as supernatural is included, and then which, no life can be found or imagined to be more pure.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

That by the Christian life men certainly come unto blessedness.

IF then it be necessary (as we have proved above) that there be some true Religion in the world, which consists especially in the rectitude of the life; the Christian life excelling every other kind of life, we must necessarily confess the Christian life to be the truest, not onely as to the inward, but also as to the outward worship, which signifies the inward, by answering and conforming it self thereunto. Christians then living according to their doctrine, and rendring unto God due worship, first to honour him, and secondly to receive blessedness from him; no
one

Ch. 6. *the Christian Faith.* 113

one can doubt, but by this worship man shall come unto blessedness.

Moreover, if it belong to the divine providence to conduct things to their ends by due means (God having a providence of humane things, and there being found no better way to bring man to blessedness then the Christian life and religion) who can doubt but that man hereby shall come to the vision and fruition of God, but he who altogether quits his reason. Again, if God be just, as we must necessarily confess he is, his providence governing humane affairs, either he will bring some man to blessedness, or none at all; we cannot say that he will bring none, for the reasons afore-said: If then
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he will bring any ; certainly he being a just distributor , cannot leave true Christians behinde , there being not found any men more apt , more disposed , and better fitted for blessedness : for if they should not attain hereunto , we must needs say , that no other persons can ; and that that which we have said , and proved with such strong reasons , cannot be true ; and that all men live in great confusion , without reason , without any order : for where there is no ultimate end , there can be no order of life , and that man would live by chance in so great miseries and calamities , more unhappily then all other creatures . These , and many other the like absurdities would follow hereupon , which none but
fools,

Ch. 6. *the Christian Faith.* 115

fools, and such as are enslaved to the life of unreasonable creatures will admit. It is therefore manifest how rationally the Christian religion speakes of the ultimate end of man and the means to attain it. And how it is necessary that we confess that the Christian religion does attain it. And therefore we must needs say that the Christian religion and faith is true.

CHAP. VII.

*That the faith of Christ is true,
because it is the cause of the best
life.*

HAVING shewed the Christian religion to be true by reasons grounded upon the good life

life of true Christians, we now intend to prove the same by reasons grounded upon the causes of the foresaid life, amongst which the principal is the faith of Christ formed in them; the holy Scripture saying, that the Faith of Christ is the righteousness of God in all and upon all that beleeve in him; without which it is impossible to please God. We call that the faith of Christ formed whereby we beleeve Christ crucified to be true God, and true man, one thing with the Father and with the holy Ghost, from whom he is distinct in person, whom we love above every other thing. We say then that faith inform'd with charity is the true cause of the Christian life. And that this is
true

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true daily experience shewes, because every day it is felt as it were with the hand, and hath been seen much more in the ages past since the coming of Christ, that suddenly as soon as any have received the faith and love of Christ in their heart, they embrace the Christian life, and by how much they become more perfect in the foresaid faith and love of Christ, by so much they are more perfect in their lives, and in like manner by how much they increase more in the goodness of their life, by so much the faith and love of Christ encreaseth more in them. And on the contrary he that leades an ill life wants this faith, and he that wants this faith lives wickedly and not according to reason.

See-

Seeing therefore that no one can deny experience, and that this effect hath been seen especially in the times past immediately after the coming of our Saviour, and that it is seen in these present times, we may very well do as the Philosophers have done, who seeing the wonderfull effects of nature began to search out the causes; so ought we to search out the truth of this wonderfull matter. Let us prove then the faith of Christ to be true from this effect.

First, Because no effect can be more perfect then its cause, on which all its perfection depends. If then the rectitude and truth of the Christian life, then which none better can be found or thought on, proceeds
from

Ch.7. *the Christian Faith.* 119

from, and depends upon the faith of Christ as its cause, it is impossible the faith of Christ should not be true.

Secondly, It is impossible that that which is false and evil should be the true and proper cause of that which is true and good, because evil as evil, and falsity as falsity, is a mere nullity. If then the faith of Christ were false, the love of Christ would be vain and evil. So good a life then as the Christian life is, could not proceed from the faith of Christ formed in us, as from its proper cause; we must therefore needs say that the faith of Christ is true.

Thirdly, If the faith of Christ were false, there could not be found a greater error, for to
say

say that a crucified man is God, if it were not true, would be an extreme folly. The Christian life then being the most perfect, so great a perfection cannot come from so great an error, because every right institution of life proceeds from the rectitude of the understanding, and every error in the affections and works of men proceeds from the error and obliquity of reason.

Fourthly, By how much a nature is better disposed, by so much it is capable of greater perfection. Truth then being the perfection of our understanding, and purity of heart the disposition to receive it, by how much a man is more purg'd from earthly affections, by so much the more he knows and embraceth the
the

Ch.7. *the Christian Faith.* 121

the truth, and puts away falsehood from him. Seeing therefore that there is no better disposition of a purified life then the Christian; if the faith of Christ were false, certainly Christians would more easily and clearly know it then other men, but we see altogether the contrary; that Christians by how much they become more holy, by so much they do the more constantly affirm the faith of Christ to be true; and by how much they do more beleieve the faith to be true, by so much they become more holy. The faith therefore cannot be false.

Fifthly, God being the first mover, and the cause of all things spiritual as well as corporeal, 'tis certain that 'tis he who moves

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mans

mans understanding, and that without him none can know any truth. Now who can doubt, that God does not rather move to know the truth, especially that which belongs to salvation, those men who are more disposed thereunto, then those who are not. True Christians then being more disposed then all other men to receive such truth from God, we cannot any ways beleieve, if the faith were false, but God would enlighten such men with the truth of salvation; because this otherwise would be contrary to the divine providence and goodness.

Sixthly, the end is the rule of the means ordained thereunto, and therefore he that errs in the end, errs also in the means. But
Chri-

Christians do not err in the means by which they go to blessedness; therefore they do not err in the end neither: seeing therefore that all Christians firmly confess, that Christ is their end, whom they endeavour to resemble, that they may enjoy him in the other life; this cannot be an error that Christ is God, and the end of mans life.

Seventhly, God proceeds orderly in whatever he does, in his wisdom governing inferiour things by superiour; and therefore he hath given more noble causes to more noble effects, the cause being always more noble then the effect. Seeing then that there is no more noble effect in the world, then the Christian life, we must needs say, that it

proceeds from a most noble cause ; it flowing altogether therefore from the faith of Christ , we must confess that the faith of Christ is no fained thing, and that he from whom such a life here upon earth proceeds, is the most noble cause.

Eightly , seeing all second causes are the instruments of the first, we must needs say, that the man Christ crucified was the instrument of God to produce this wonderfull effect of the Christian life. If then Christ be not God, making himself to be called God, there cannot be found a man more proud and wicked then he , and God should have used one of the worst instruments, to produce this most noble effect, which is contrary to the

Ch.7. *the Christian Faith.* 125

the order of his wisdom; we cannot therefore rationally say that Christ is not God, and that the faith is not true.

Ninthly, by how much the effect becomes more like to its cause, by so much it is more perfect; because its perfection consists herein. Since then we see, that by how much any does more follow the steps of Christ, and becomes more like him, by so much he is the more holy and the more divine, it is a manifest signe that Christ is true God.

Tenthly, by the effects we know the causes, and by experience the medicines: we having seen therefore that Philosophers wearying themselves in their greatest studie, to prescribe rules how to live well, have amongst

few men after many years done little to make any perfect: and that in those few, those who have been reputed the prime, and the most holy, could never find that pure, sincere, and perfect life, which the faith of Christ hath brought forth, with great quickness and accomplishment; not in a few, but in innumerable men and women, of every generation and condition. For certainly, he that is not blind, sees that there is no comparison between the Philosophical doctrine and the Christian discipline, especially since there is nothing more wonderfull then this, as we may prove by innumerable examples of the time past and present, that as soon as any is converted truly unto Christ crucified,

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ed, he puts on altogether the new man: of proud and envious, he becomes humble and courteous; of a robber and covetous, free and liberal; of incontinent and luxurious, chaste and temperate. And finally, he devests himself of all vice, and clothes himself with all vertue, and bewails the evils which he hath committed. Which things no sect of the Philosophers ever yet did. We need not therefore doubt, but Christ as God, is the principal cause of the perfection of mans life, and as man the instrumental cause and cure of it.

CHAP. VIII.

That the doctrine which the Christian faith teacheth, is true and of God.

THe reading furthermore, and the hearing, and the meditation of the holy Scriptures, is the cause of the Christian life, and the substance and the foundation of our Religion, the object of which is the truth of the faith. And therefore after the reasons grounded upon the faith of Christ, we will here set down such reasons as are drawn from the vertue of the holy Scriptures.

First, we know that there is no determinate knowledge of future things, which may indifferently be or not be (as those
prove

prove, who amongst the Philosophers have been reputed the most wise and excellent) because God onely knows them, who comprehendeth all things with his eternity; and therefore men cannot know them, if they be not revealed by God. Seeing therefore that the holy Scripture, as it were in every place, and especially in the Old Testament, hath declared things to come depending on free-will, and that not onely in general, but also in particular; not onely one year, or ten years before, but an hundred, and a thousand; nay, three or four thousand years, of such things as related not onely to the Jews, and to Christ and his Church; but also things both prosperous & adverse, belonging

as it were to all nations and kingdoms; namely, of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, Medes, Grecians, & Romanes; and of other nations & lesser kingdoms: I say, seeing that these as they have been declared by the Prophets, so many years before, so they are come to pass from point to point, and if any be not yet accomplished, the truth of those innumerable things already past, assures us that they shall be accomplished in their time: We must needs confess that the holy Scriptures cannot proceed from mans wit and cunning, but from God alone, who in this shews the great care and providence that he hath of humane affairs, in that he speaks of them so many years before they happen.

Second.

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Secondly, God alone foreknowing the said future things, no man (let his wisdom and industry be never so great) can orderly dispose of the wars and deeds of kings and great men, their names, and places, and divers works, and the chances of the divers conditions of men to signify future things, because such things are not subject to the will of any, but of God. And though any were willing to order them after his own manner, so as to make them the figures of things to come; yet would he not be able to do it, because such things are not wholly subject to him, nor could he know them, because he cannot know what is to come. But we see that all the New Testament, and the things

things which Christ did and suffered, with the whole Church, have been figured in the Old Testament: we must therefore needs say, that both the one and the other Testament is of God. Nor can any one rationally say, they were contrived and adapted in such manner by Christians; because in so great a variety of times and things, & in so great a multitude of people & diversity of Authours, it were not possible there should be so great an uniformity in the Old and New Testaments, if that understanding had not made it, which sees every thing that shall fall out in every time. Nor can it be said that this is done by chance, there being found nothing that is impertinent, or dissonant between these
two.

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two Testaments, but every thing agreeing together from the greatest to the least, and that which is obscurely said in one place, fitly and clearly expressed in another, insomuch that the Scripture expounds it self: and if this be not known to those who have not studied it, those who sincerely are vers'd therein know that I do not lie, and every one who piously with faith and humilitie, and puritie of heart shall studie it, without doubt will understand that which I say to be true.

And for this cause the Scripture alone hath the dignity of *Allegorical* sense. But note then, that we call an *Allegory* not a fabulous interpretation, as Poets do, because we expound the parables.

rables, and call such an exposition not an *Allegorical*, but a literal and *parabolical* sense: for it is not our intention to express by the words of the fable or parable, that which the terms signify, but to demonstrate that which we understand by the things signified by those words. We call that therefore an *Allegorical* sense which hath these three things. *First*, That some history or thing truly done be expressed by the words without fable or fiction. *Secondly*, That the history or thing done signify somewhat that is future. *Thirdly*, That such history or thing be not onely done because it is; but also that it figure that other thing which is to come. There being none therefore that can do
this.

this but God, and the Scripture being full of such Allegories, it is manifest that it is from no other but from God.

Thirdly, The manner of speaking and proceeding in the holy Scriptures is so singular, that none of our Doctours, though the most learned and eloquent, have ever been able to imitate it, nor is there such a manner of speaking to be found in any other Authours, as in the Prophets, and in those who have dictated the holy Scripture; who notwithstanding they lived in several times, and that one is more eloquent then another; nevertheless they have all kept such a manner of speaking, which no other men have been able to do, nor yet can, although they should
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force themselves to it. This therefore is a manifest signe that this doctrine is not made by man, but God; who hath reserved to himself alone this manner of speaking.

Fourthly, The effects that follow it especially prove this, because the vertue of the cause is known by its effect. There being then no more noble effect in the world then the Christian life, and this doctrine and manner of speaking, being the chief instrumental cause and foundation of such a life; 'tis manifest that it cannot proceed but from the principal cause of the Christian life, which is God. Certainly the long experience of the ages past, demonstrate this to be, that humane sciences contribute little to
a good

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a good life; for before this doctrine was preached, the whole world was in the darkness of ignorance, and in a deep night of sin; but after that the rayes of the Apostolick doctrine appeared, it was enlightened with true knowledge, and with many heavenly secrets. And we have seen by experience in these present times, that this doctrine in its own way, hath more enlightened, delighted, and inclined men to live well, then any other; and that those Preachers which have neglected it, and given themselves to Philosophy, and the art of Oratory, have brought forth little or no fruit amongst the Christian people.

Our fathers preaching the holy Scriptures with all simplicity
in

in the ages past did so enflame the people with divine love, that they rejoyced in adversity, and in the midst of their martyrdoms. God is my witness, that in preaching many times to the people; whilst I wandred through the subtilty of Philosophy, to demonstrate to the presumptuous and proud wits of this world the profoundness of the holy Scriptures, I saw the people less attentive: but as soon as I turned my self to the exposition of the holy Scriptures, all their eyes were intent upon me, and so strongly were they fix'd, that they seemed to hang upon my words as so many statues of marble. And I have further known by experience, that since I left to preach the questions of School-Divi-

Divinity, and applyed my self to the exposition of the Scriptures, the people have been much more enlightened, then they were at first; and my preaching hath brought forth much more fruit, in drawing a greater number of people unto Christ, and provoking them to a more perfect life. This is that wonderfull doctrine, which pierceth the heart of man more with love, and entreth further then the sharpest knife can do, which hath adorn'd the world w^h vertue, hath overthrown the superstitious and devillish worship of idolls, purged the world of infinite errours, and done therein those wonderfull things whereof we shall speak hereafter. Whereby it is manifest, that this doctrine, and the manner where-
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in it is delivered, does not proceed but from God.

Fifthly, The understanding of man by how much it is the more purged, by so much it is the more capable of truth, there being not then found a more perfect purity of life, then that which is seen in Christians; if the Scriptures were not of God, those who are truly Christian Doctours, would better know it then other men, especially such who are of the excellentest wit, and purest life, who are found in no small number; but these in their works, and in innumerable volumes of their books, have so much exalted this doctrine, that they have preach'd and writ, that it is not lawfull to deny the least iota of it, because it is composed by the
spirit

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spirit of God; for the defence of
which they have shed their
bloud, and have been more wil-
ling to leave their life, then the
faith; and this certainly they
would not have done, but that
they have felt (as it were) with
the hand, that this doctrine is
of God.

Sixthly, The truth is not con-
trary, but consonant to the truth,
whereas truth and falshood never
agree. Seeing therefore that e-
very other science agrees with
the holy Scripture, it appears,
that not falsity but truth is con-
tained therein. Whence it is,
that our Doctours who have
been most vers'd in all the scien-
ces, have shewed, that no true
science is repugnant to the holy
Scripture; and therefore it is not
pro-

prohibited to Christians to study any learning, save what is superstitious, divining, and pernicious, which likewise is condemned and derided by Philosophers, and not reputed any part of the sciences. This therefore is a signe of the truth of the holy Scripture, because if it were false, it would not be possible but Philosophy, either real or rational, in some part would be repugnant to it; but our Doctours shew that there is no repugnancy thereunto in any part, and do solve all seeming contradictions.

Seventhly, The nature of truth is such, that by how much it is more opposed, if it have any to defend it, by so much it becomes more clear and manifest to the understanding, which is naturally

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turally inc'in'd thereunto as to
its perfection. The Christian
doctrine then having been so
fiercely opposed as well by Phi-
losophers as Tyrants, and having
always held up, and prevailed the
more thereby; it appears certain-
ly, that there is all truth therein,
otherwise it could not have en-
dured amongst so great contra-
dictions and assaults, as well of
weapons as arguments.

CHAP. IX.

*That the Faith is true, by reasons
grounded upon the prayers and
contemplations of Christians.*

AS the belief and meditation
of the holy Scriptures, is
the cause of the Christian life;
so

so prayer nourisheth, increaseth, and perfecteth this life: the experience of the times present, as well as past, shewing that Christians given to continual prayer, in a short time acquire great perfection of life. And all those who make any proficiency in their life, do not cease continually to give themselves unto prayer, wherein by experience and their attestation, we know they find so great delight, as to divine things, that they account all other things as vile and nothing. Which befalls not onely a few, and such as are wise, but many simple persons, and all who exercise themselves herein, both men and women, small and great. From this effect therefore which no one can deny, because it is
seen

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seen with the eyes , we will prove our faith to be true.

First , because God being a pure act, the first truth and infinite light, by how much a man draws nearer to God, not with the body, but with the mind, by so much he partakes more of his purity , truth , and light. The Christian life therefore being the most pure and perfect that is to be found, certainly it is nearer to God then any other life ; but it is then especially that it draws nearest unto God, whē it is in the act of prayer and contemplation. Therefore in this act it is chiefly capable of the divine purity, truth and light. Seeing then that Christians in their prayers and contemplations , do more confirm themselves in the faith

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of Christ crucified, and are more enflamed with his love; no one can denie but that the faith is a divine truth and light.

Secondly, our understanding naturally is inclined to desire and delight it self in truth, and to avoid falsitie; and the natural inclination of every thing is the more vehement, by how much it is the more purified. If therefore Christians in the act of prayer, wherein the understanding is more purified then in any other act, do then more embrace the faith of Christ, then at any other time; it is manifest that the faith is a truth, and no falsitie.

Thirdly, Christians in all their prayers, what they ask of God, they ask it by the mediation and merits

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merits of Christ crucified, and so obtain great things : and he that will not beleve this, cannot at least deny that which is daily 'touch'd (as it were) with the hand, namely, the obtaining of the holy Christian life, which is the thing they chiefly pray for, and that joy, and peace, and tranquillity of heart. Certainly, if Christ were not that which they beleve him to be, they would be enlightened by God with the truth; or if they would remain obstinate in their error, they would not be heard, as they are, by the mediation of Christ.

Fourthly, No cause disposeth the matter to introduce thereinto the form; nor does any natural mover move any thing, but with intention to conduct it to its end.

Blessedness then being the end of a good life and of prayer, and no one being able to move himself to live well, and to pray, if he be not first moved by God; and Christians being moved by him to so perfect a life, and such elevated prayers, and confirming themselves always thereby the more in the faith, 'tis manifest that this is the way to come to true blessedness: because if the faith were not true, it would be an obstacle to such a divine motion, which without all doubt would be removed by the first cause, and the first mover, that the end intended by him might not be hindred.

(*Fifthly*, Every cause after a certain manner hears its effect,
(whose appetite of perfection is
a kind

a kind of prayer, in having recourse to the cause to dispose it self to it). And we see in natural things, that after the matter is perfectly disposed, no cause differs to give it form ; which proceeds from the goodness of the cause , the nature of good being to diffuse it self. God then being the chiefest good, without comparison exceeds all causes in hearing his effects , when they are well disposed to receive his influx. There being not found then any better disposition of the Christian life, then when it is in the act of prayer and contemplation, we cannot say that Christians in the requests which they make unto God, are defrauded. Seeing therefore that above all other things, they desire to be

enlightened with the truth, as *David* speaks in the person of all; *Lighten mine eyes, O Lord, lest I sleep the death of sin:* we must without doubt affirm, that the true Christians are enlightened with the truth appertaining to salvation. They therefore always confirming themselves the more by their prayers in the faith of Christ, as in that which is necessary to their salvation, we are constrained to confess, that the faith of Christ is true, and not false.

Sixthly, If Christ were not God, to beleeve and confess him to be God, and the same thing with the Father and the holy Ghost, would be a great blasphemy, and especially through his mediation and merits to make
our

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our prayers unto God. The infinite divine goodness would not then have Christians in so great an error, they being the best men of the world, and always prepared to revoke every error which derogates from the divine Majesty. And if any should say, That God does not recall them, because they are obstinate in such errors: this is manifestly false; for then God would not hear their prayers, made by the means of so detestable a blasphemy, but would most grievously punish them.

Seventhly, If the faith of Christ were false, there could not be found a greater abuse, then to worship a crucified man for their God. Our understanding then naturally delighting it self

in truth, and confounding it self
in falsehood, it were not possible
that so great a multitude of Chri-
stians, especially great wits, and
learned men, should so much
delight themselves in the con-
templation and love of Christ
crucified, that they should not
onely willingly undergo hunger
and thirst, labour and loss,
threatnings, scourgings, pri-
sons, martyrdoms, and finally
death it self; but also with great
fervencie desire them. Certain-
ly this is no other then the
power of God.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

*That the faith of Christ is true,
by reasons grounded upon the
outward worship of the Christi-
an religion.*

WE have proved the Christian religion to be true from the principal causes of the Christian life, and these are the internal causes. We intend now to prove the same by the external causes, that is, by the Sacraments and the Ceremonies ordained thereunto. We see therefore, and by experience it hath been proved from the beginning of our religion to these present times, that those who devoutly frequent and observe the Sacraments, chiefly that of the Eucharist, become every day

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more perfect in their lives, and more divine; whereas those who frequent them without due devotion, and with an irreligious familiaritie, become every day more obdurate and wretched then other men. Now that two contrary effects by reason of the contrary disposition of the matter, may come from one and the same cause, is not contrary to Philosophy: for we see that the beams of the sun harden the earth, and thaw the ice, they cause the trees that are well planted to flourish and fructifie, and those that are pulled up to wither away. Certainly, these two effects whereof we speak, being so opposite, cannot proceed from a cause that is vain and false: for if the outward worship of

of the Christian religion did not depend upon God, and were it not the instrument of his divine power and truth, it could not produce so excellent an effect, as to nourish and make perfect the Christian life, which is altogether spiritual and divine.

But possibly some may say, that it proceeds not from this service, but from the exercise of vertue; because men beleiving this worship to be divine, exercise themselves hereby in a good life; and so by this means become perfect. But we ask then, why those who exercise themselves in vertue, without the use of the Sacraments, do not attain that integrity of life which the others do? Certainly if this worship were unprofitable
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and false, by how much men should further remove themselves from it, by so much they would become better, and more remov'd from error; and those who deride and scorn it, would not be the worst, but the best of all other men, the contrary whereof every dayes experience shews us.

Again, God being the chiefest truth, by how much a man draws nearer unto God, by so much he hath more of his light and truth; and by how much he is the more entangled in error and falshood, by so much he is at the greater distance from him. But we know that all those who religiously frequent the Sacrament, do so conjoyn themselves with God, that in their countenance and senses, there

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there appear manifest signes of the presence of the divine light. And many, as in an extasie, change their visage and become more amiable and venerable, which though it were more seen in times past, yet we likewise have seen this wonderfull effect in our times, in many both wise and simple, as well men as women. Whence then comes this rapture and sweet contemplation, and fervour of spirit? whence these sighs and tears in the time that this outward worship is exercised? Certainly, if it were not of God, it would be very fallacious and ridiculous. Since therefore in the Sacraments, singing of Psalms, &c. just men have so great a delight in drawing near unto God, whereas er-

our causeth a distance from God; we cannot doubt but the worship of the Church is full of grace and truth.

Moreover, the wonderfull order of things, and the significancie of the ceremonies of the Church, shew that this worship is no humane invention, but a divine disposition; because there is nothing vain nor irrational, but all the parts thereof, even the least, are mysterious.

CHAP. XI.

The truth of the faith proved, from the intrinsecal effects of the Christian life.

HAving proved according to the mediocrity of our small

small understanding, that the Faith is true, by reasons grounded upon the intrinsecal and extrinsecal causes of the Christian life; it is now time to prove it by reasons grounded upon the effects thereof; amongst which one that is intrinsecal and the greatest, is the joy and peace of the mind, and the liberty of the soul: For we see by experience, and that more perfectly in the Saints aforesaid, when the faith of Christ was in greater fervour then it is at present, that the true Christians had such peace and joy in their mind, that no troubles did shake them, and that they were so free to confess Christ, and to live well, that they had no fear of any tribulation, but were joyfull in the midst of their mar-

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tyrdoms : And the more they drew near unto Christ, the more this effect appeared in them, whereof we can assigne no other cause but that which they themselves do, namely, the union of their heart with God, who onely is the term, the ultimate end, and rest of mans heart. And by the firm hope that they have after this life to obtain blessedness, they make no esteem of temporal things, nor to loose the present life ; but because of the greatness of those eternal good things that they hope for, they do with joy expect death, and therefore do not fear any persecution. And God being always in them, especially by his grace and by contemplation and love, they are comforted and fortified
by

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by his presence, so that they do not fear any thing, because the help of the Almighty is always at hand: whence it is that they are neither exalted in prosperity, nor dejected in adversitie. They say further, that this peace, and joy, and liberty of soul, cannot proceed from any humane or natural power, because of the impediments of the sensitive part, and the weakness of our understanding; but that it is the supernatural gift of God, by which the divine light and blessedness promised to them, stands always before their eyes. Now that this is the cause of such an effect, is proved by this reason: Because our soul being one, and having all its faculties founded in it self, when it is strongly intent
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the operation of one faculty, it cannot be intent to the operation of another; as when one vehemently gives himself to contemplation, he looseth the operation of the sense, especially when his contemplation is very intense; and in like manner the vehement delights and pains of the flesh, cause us to loose the contemplation of the understanding. Whence it follows, that it is not naturally possible, (speaking of men in the greatest calamities, and the most cruel corporeal martyrdoms) that they should have in their intellective part so great tranquillity, joy, and liberty, as is seen in true Christians; and especially those of the ages past; and the more, because this hath been seen, not in a few, but
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in innumerable persons of both sexes, and of every condition. I say this, that the wisemen of this world may not say, that others who are not Christians, have done the same; whilst they name one or two, or a very few, which they produce as a miracle, and do not see that ours are innumerable, and that their saints are not to be compared in perfection of life, to the least babe who is truly Christian, there being found in them no small errors of the understanding, and obliquity of the affections, as might be shewed by their books. It appears then that this effect is not natural, but (as Christians say) that it is of God by supernatural grace, from which the faith of Christ is manifestly
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proved to be true, because the faith of Christ crucified, being all the foundation of the fore-said effect, if it were false it could not be of God, and so Christians should remain in their pure naturals, abounding in many errors, so that it would not be possible that such an effect should either be, or increase in the midst of the greatest tribulations.

Again, by how much a man lives better, by so much he is more acquainted with the truth, and delighted with what is good; by so much the more he avoids what is false, and is displeased with what is evil. If then the faith of Christ were not true, the true Christian would be full of falsity, and would do very ill to worship Christ for God, especially

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ally so obstinately as he doth. But we see by experience, that by how much the Christian lives better, by so much he is the more confirmed in the faith of Christ, and that the peace, and joy, and liberty of the mind increaseth in him : the contrary whereof would appear, if the faith of Christ were false ; we must therefore needs say that it is true.

CHAP. XII.

The truth of the faith appears from the extrinsecal effects of the Christian life.

Here follows another effect of the Christian life, which appears in the outward man,

man, namely, in the very looks
 and manners, by which many are
 constrained to honour and reve-
 rence them. Whence we read,
 that many proud and cruel men
 have laid aside their fierceness at
 the presence of Christians,
 whose outward habit was hum-
 ble and mean; as *Attila* the most
 potent and cruel king of the
Huns, is said to have been so a-
 stonished at the presence and
 words of *Leo*, that not without
 the admiration of many, he left
 off the enterprize of *Italy*: and
Tottila the most cruel king of the
Goths, to have been so affected
 with the sight of *Bennet* the
 Monke, that he cast himself up-
 on the ground, and would not
 rise thence till *Bennet* command-
 ed him. Furthermore, *Theodosius*
 the

the Emperour, after that great slaughter he had made in *Thessalonica*, being cast out of the Church by S. *Ambrose*, had no mind to contradict him, but humbled himself before him, and did pennance. If I should here reherse all the examples that I might, the time would fail me; but it is not necessary to enlarge in this which is so manifest, we having seen likewise in our times many arrogant and wicked persons, to change their mind and words before holy men, and being prickt at the heart, to have reformed their lives.

We see therefore that the cause of this effect is the infusion of supernatural grace, with all the vertues: because we see the soul by the force of the imagination

nation, alters the body very much, and changeth the countenance: Whence it is that by the imagination of dishonest things, men are enflam'd to lust, and by those of hatred to anger. By fear men become pale, and by anger and shamesac'dness they grow red; the joy of the heart is seen in the pleasantness of the eyes and countenance. Because therefore that our understanding useth the corporeal organs of the sensitive part, our thoughts many times when they are vehement, make an impression upon the body, especially the face and eyes. Whence it is oftentimes, that proud men are known by the arrogance of their looks, cruel men by the turning of their eyes, light and vain men by the
in-

instability of their members, and wanton men by their lascivious aspect. And so far does the evil thought many times proceed, that it not onely rebounds upon the body of the person that thinks it; but it infects also the very aire that is near to it, and passeth to other bodies likewise, whom it approacheth, as experience shews in some wicked old witches, who by their contagious looks destroy little children, which by reason of their tenderness receive such infection. Finally, good and evil habits which are firmly fixt in our souls, cannot be dissembled, but they will appear sometimes in the face.

Seeing therefore that every agent produceth that which is like it self, and every effect ex-
I preffeth

preſſeth its cauſe; certainly this beauty and venerableneſs of perfect Chriſtians, cannot proceed but from the beauty of their ſoul, which is of ſo great efficacy, that nothing is found more available for the converſion of ſinners: for we have proved, that the holy life of ſimple perſons, doth more conduce to the ſalvation of ſouls, then the learning and eloquence of Philoſophers, and the miracles which have been either ſeen or heard of: whence it is that we have obſerved, when the moſt eloquent and learned men have preach'd of high matters, and been heard with great attention; if their life have not answered their words, they have onely carried away the praiſe of their learning and eloquence,

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quence, but brought little or no
fruit to the Church of God.
And it hath been likewise seen in
the ages past, and in the present
also, that when innumerable
multitudes of men and women,
have come together from all
parts, drawn by the miracles
which were said to be done, little
or no amendment hath followed,
by all that I have been able to
search out: but innumerable, not
onely such as are simple, but the
prudent and learned have been
wrought upon and converted by
the good life of Christians.
Whereby it is manifest, there
must be some great vertue in
Christians, by which these won-
derfull effects are produced: for
we see the body does not work
properly upon the spirit, as the

heavenly bodies, by reason of their subtilty, do not suffer by any other body (no not by the fire which is so near them) much less can the spirit suffer by bodies, it being all form, and elevated from all corporeal matter; this, I say, it cannot do naturally. Seeing therefore that the outward things of Christians are corporeal, they could not with so great efficacie change the spirit, that is, the understanding, and the will of other men, to desire these invisible things, if there were no other vertue in them then that which is corporeal and natural. And seeing further that the chiefeft vertue in the most perfect Christian, whence all his good life, his outward beauty and comeliness proceeds, is the lively
faith

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faith and love of Christ crucified:
This faith can be no other then
the truth, and inward beauty of
the soul, especially seeing by how
much this increaseth or diminish-
eth, by so much the good life, and
outward reverence increaseth or
diminisheth likewise.

Again, truth is more power-
full then falsehood, but (as we have
said) there was never found any
way more effectual to bring men
to live well, then the example of
the Christian life: for the life of
Philosophers, which is so much
exalted by the heathen, brought
very few to a good Philosophi-
cal life; but by the good life of
Christians, so many have been
brought to live well, that they
are innumerable. The root there-
fore and vertue of these exam-

ples cannot be false or vain: otherwise the life of Philosophers would have brought forth more and better fruit then that of Christians, the contrary whereof we see by experience.

Moreover, God being the first mover, without whom nothing is moved, and doing every thing wisely, he proposeth the most noble causes to the most noble effects. Seeing therefore that the Christian life is the most noble effect, we must needs say, that it hath the most noble causes, amongst which one of the greatest is the good example of this life. Whence we see, that the like begets the like, a man begets a man, and a horse a horse. Therefore we must necessarily affirm, that the example
of

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of a good life is the most noble
cause and instrument of God, to
bring men to live well, and that
therein there is a divine vertue
without any falsitie; which being
no other then faith informed by
charity (as is above-said) it fol-
lows that the Faith is true.

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CHAP. XIII.

*The truth of the faith proved by
the wonderfull works of Christ,
and first by those which belong to
his power.*

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VVE have proved by
Gods assistance, that
the faith is true by the effects
which are daily seen in the
Church, and possibly other rea-
sons might be alledged for the

confirmation hereof. Nevertheless, because men are delighted with brevity, we will begin with the reasons grounded upon the works of Christ already past, and manifested to the whole world. As Philosophers therefore seeing the effects of natural things, sought out their causes, so will we here set before our eyes the Triumph above described; and as they by the greatness and the wonderfull order and perfection of the Universe, understood God to be the most potent, the most wise, and the most perfect cause amongst all causes; whom they called the first cause, and the first principle and mover of every thing; so we by the wonderfull things described in the said Triumph, will shew Christ
cru-

crucified amongst all those who have been named or worshipped for gods, to have been, and to be more potent, and without comparison to have done greater and better things: and that further, by his wisdom and goodness he infinitely excels all others; which thing if we shall prove, it will be certain that he is the great God, and the great Lord and King above all gods.

Let us then begin with his power, and setting here before our eyes the fore-said Triumph, we will dispute in this manner. Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and worshipped by the Christians, is either true God indeed, or no. If he be God, we need not further to dispute, because it will follow, that the Christian faith,

and doctrine, and religion is true; if he be not, it follows, that Jesus of Nazareth was most proud above all other men, the greatest liar, and the worst of men; because being a man, he would be esteemed God, and worshipped by men. Furthermore it follows, that he was most foolish, to undertake such and so great a province. Certainly, there is none who would not think it the highest folly that a poor man, and a begger without arms, and without Philosophy or Rhetorick, by vertue of his death alone, should be willing to enter a combat against the divine Majestie, to take from him his due honour, and assume it to himself; to involve men great and wise of every condition in a new and unheard of.

of Religion, to destroy the worship of all other gods, to give a new form to the whole world, and to change it from its accustomed course, wherein it had continued for so many thousands of years; and to command that men should not onely worship him for God in his life, but much more after the shamefull death of the cross; and that men should love him so much, as that they should rather suffer every kind of Martyrdom and death, then to denie him. Here I ask thee, O Reader, be thou who thou wilt, if any man should think to do such things as these, and reveal to thee his secret; tell me, I pray thee, tell me a little, what wouldst thou say? wouldst thou not think that his brains were turn'd

in his head? how greatly wouldst thou deride his folly? If *Jesus* of Nazareth then were not God, he should have been a most proud, a most foolish, and a most sacrilegious seducer. With what power then could he have combated, and obtained the victory against the laws of Moses, against the Princes and wisemen, and the whole world that was contrary to him, against the heavenly and infernal powers; and finally, against God the supreme Creator of all things, and yet amongst so great wars and oppositions, be possessor of this kingdom so many hundreds and hundreds of years. Tell me, O ye Jews, why hath not your God, the Governour of the world, revenged himself of such an injury as this?

and

and wherefore, O ye Gentiles, have not your gods cast him out? How could a man so vile and abject as to the world, crucified and dead, do such great things? which of your gods, I do not say men, can be compared unto Christ? Consider then thou who readeſt this, what a foolish thing it is to compare with *Jesus* of Nazareth *Apollonius Tyrameus* [called *Thyaneus* by others], *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, or any other excellent Philosopher, or *Alexander*, or *Cesar*, or other Emperours, or excellent men: seeing that none of them made himself God, nor all together have done any such excellent things, as those which have been performed by Christ.

What excellent thing ever
did.

did that most cunning *Mahomet*, who did not make himself God; but with power of arms, with flattery and fraud, drew to him the most barbarous nations, and nevertheless he spake honourably of Christ, and did nothing above humane force. Such an one was not our *Jesus* of Nazareth, because never any yet proposed to men things so difficult both to beleeve and do. Willing and commanding that men beleeve that God is one in nature, and three in persons, namely, the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost, who are one onely true God, and one most simple substance; and that he is true God, the Son of God, one thing with the Father and the holy Ghost; and true man, the son of the vir-
gine

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gine Mary, &c. Commanding further, that inviolable faith be given to every the least word of the holy Scripture, notwithstanding that there are many things therein very hard to mans understanding. Which yet is not sufficient to mans salvation, unless he so love the things that are not seen, that he despise those that are seen, and rather suffer every kind of persecution and death, then offend him in the least thing: not promising to those that are his, riches and honours, and dignities in this present life, but altogether the contrary, namely, poverty, reproach, persecutions, scourges, banishment, prisons, martyrdoms, and death. After which he promiseteth unspeakable blessedness, propo-

proposing such things as exceed all humane capacity, namely, the resurrection of their bodies, the glory of Angels in the heaven; and that which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. And nevertheless proposing such difficult things to men, he hath obtain'd that which he desired, in opposition to all the world: for innumerable persons of every generation and condition, have received the faith, and his doctrine, with so great firmness, that they have been willing rather to loose their life then the faith; and not onely men of low condition, but also the great Kings and Princes, and wisemen, have humbly bowed themselves, not onely to him, but

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but to the least of his Ministers,
as we may see even in these pre-
sent times.

Let us set then before our eyes
Christ in all his poverty, reputed
the son of a carpenter, and in his
time (according to the world)
ignoble, and of base condition;
and let us ask him what he him-
self thinks, and he will answer;
I, who am poor, and a stranger,
have determined to give laws to
the world, and so to new frame it
with these, that men shall worship
me as true God, and one with the
Father and the holy Ghost; yea,
after that I shall be most oppro-
briously crucified; and that they
shall beleeve my doctrine to ex-
cell all others, and that it is not
lawfull to deny the least iota of
it. If a poor wretch should
think

think and talk of such things as these, would not you think that he were foolish and worthy to be derided. But if whilest you deride, he should go on, and say, I will that they do not onely believe these things, but further that hereby they live holily, and that for the promises made to them of invisible things, they despise all that is visible, and for the love they bear to me, that they suffer poverty, hunger, thirst, labour, torment, and death, rather then to denie the least iota of my doctrine: whilest he should thus speak, would not you think him wilde, and deprived of all reason? But if yet to the fore-said things he should add, I will do all these things against the will of the whole world, I
will

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will do them against Kings and Princes, and against all the sects of the gods, and of men, and against all the powers of hell, and I will obtain over them all victory and triumph : certainly you would laugh at such an undertaking, as the attempt of one who were altogether out of his wits. But if being demanded further, with what arms he should do these things, he should answer, not with any other arms, but with this tongue. And least any might think he would use eloquence, which many times is powerfull to perswade men, he should say, that he would not make any use of Rhetorick, or Philosophy, neither he nor his disciples, but onely of a plain and simple manner of speaking, you would

would yet think him more foolish then at first. But, if afterwards he should subjoyn hereunto, I know that an infinite multitude of men through all the world shall be converted to me, and for the love of me shall suffer martyrdom and death, and by how much more of my Christians shall die, by so much they shall the more increase, the bloud of my martyrs being the seed of my faithfull ones. O! if before Christ came; you had seen a pitifull poor person talk of such things as these, would not you have beleevved that he had been altogether out of his senses? And if besides all the afore-said things, he should say, that infinite books should be composed in every language, by the most learned.

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learned and excellent men, of me and my praises, and in defence of my doctrine, and that my Ministers shall declare my doctrine in the most eminent place, with the greatest reverence, and solemn preparation to the people, who shall likewise hear it reverently, with the head uncovered; would not you have thought that these things had been a vain dream? And finally if he should have concluded saying. All this that I intend to have done, I will without doubt do in every place victoriously, and no one shall be able to prevail against me, nor ever to dissipate my religion, which shall endure for ever. Certainly when you should well consider all the afore said things, you would judge, that not onely they
were

were not possible to be done by a poor mean man, but also that neither all the excellent men in the world, nor all the forces of nature, nor all the influences of the heaven could effect them. Whereas then we see that these things are done, who can deny but that they are the works of the divine Majestie, and that the faith of Christ is true, but he that hath altogether lost his understanding, and is blinded with his vices? What Magician, what Philosopher, what mighty King hath ever done such things? Do you think that either Mahomet, or the gods of the heathen are to be compared to Christ? before whose coming I do not say that any such like things were done, but that never any thought they could

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could be done. Nor yet can it be said that they fell out by chance, because they were foretold a long time before by the Prophets. And therefore it appears that the faith of Christ was given by God, and that it cannot be any way false.

Again we see in natural things that some causes do always produce their effects. Some as it were always, others are indifferent to produce them or not to produce them. So it is in the reasons which are alledged to prove any thing; for there are some reasons which always constrain the understanding to consent, and these Logicians call demonstrations, and there are some likewise which are not of so great efficacy, yet they do as it were
always

always incline the understanding to beleeve, and there are others so weak, that they work little upon the understanding. And however the Mathematical sciences abound in demonstrations, nevertheless there are but few to be found in the Natural sciences, and very few, and perhaps none at all in the Moral; and in those which speak of the most high and divine things: because our understanding is so weak, that it does not truly know the properties of things. And therefore it is very hard to inforce it in the things that are not very manifest, there being so many ways for it to escape. If then it be so hard, especially in moral and divine things, wholly to convince the understanding of man, much more

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more hard will it be to incline the understanding together with the affections to vertue and divine contemplation, especially since the flesh always resists the spirit. But above all things, it is most difficult to force the understanding, and to incline the affection to these things, so that they may persevere in this good work. And hereupon it is, that we see there are in the schools of Philosophers as many opinions as heads, and that few love that which they understand & teach, and that fewer yet have those affections to good works, so as to remain constant in them; and that if any such was found amongst the Philosophers, he was look'd upon as a miracle. If therefore the chief Philosophers

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with

with all the power of their learning and eloquence, have very hardly been able to confirm the understanding of a few men, to beleieve the things that are implanted in mans nature, as for example, That Gods providence rules over humane affairs, and that we ought to follow the good of vertue, and always to avoid vice; and have had no power at all, unless in a very few, to confirm them in the doing of good? How much less power would they have had, effectually to perswade men to the things which are altogether above natural reason? especially in such manner, that love with all virtuous actions might have followed their perswasions. But the Disciples of Christ, illiterate men,

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men, and fishers, with their simple preaching so perswaded the world concerning the things of faith, that innumerable men beleeved them, as Philosophers do the first principles, and with so great affection embraced them, and with such good and holy operations followed them, that they esteemed all the other things of the world as dirt and dung, and could neither by flatteries nor threatnings, no not by the most cruel deaths and martyrdoms, be ever withdrawn from that love, and those holy works. With what vertue then could those fishers and unlearned men, obtain that which is above all the capacitie of man; since the most excellent Philosophers (of whom their followers say, that

nature had imployed her utmost force in the subliming of their wits) could not obtain those things which are naturally implanted in mens minds. Certainly, if the faith were not true, fisher-men could not have done that in things which are false, which a great force of nature could not effect in such things as are true.

Moreover, if Christ and his fisher-men, have all the world over with so great power perswaded men concerning his doctrine, it appears that they have not been able to do it with single words onely; chiefly because the wise and prudent, and the Grandees of the world have not beleeved them. We must therefore needs say, that they have
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confirmed their words by miracles, as is manifest to the whole world. There being none then that could do such miracles but God, because they are above all the force of nature, and God never giving testimony to a lie, it remains that their doctrine, and the faith which they have preached is true. And if any should deny the miracles, assuredly it would be the greatest miracle of all, that a crucified man with his poor fisher-men, should do the miracles afore-said, and perswade the world in such manner with their simple words, without any miracle at all. Therefore whether these things were done with miracles or without miracles, it cannot be denied but the power of Christ hath over-

come all other power that ever was seen in the world. As Philosophers then say, that among the causes that is the first which is more potent then the rest; so we must needs conclude, that among the gods he is the true, and the most high God, who is more mighty then all. There being found therefore none more powerfull then our Saviour Christ Jesus, who hath triumphed over them all, it follows, that he is the true God, and that our faith is true.

CHAP. XIV.

The faith is true by reasons grounded upon the wisdom of Christ.

LEt us further shew, that Christ hath exceeded every

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ry man in wisdom: First, because it appertains to wisdom rightly to ordain things to the end, which is the rule of such order. Whence it is, that in the arts, such an artificer is called wise, who orders the things of art to their principal end. But because artificers consider particular ends onely, they are not called wise absolutely, but every one in his art. He then may be called wise absolutely, who considers the last end of mans life, and composeth himself and all his works hereunto. Seeing therefore that Jesus of Nazareth hath shewed the true end of mans life, and the true way to come to it, and so effectually taught it, that his disciples the faithfull Christians, have ordered

all their life, so as by that way to attain it, which is seen in none else, neither in the gods of the Pagans, nor in men; it follows, that he onely is truly wise, and that his wisdom is most eminent above all others, there being neither a better end nor means to attain it, then that which he hath taught.

2. It is a signe of a mans great wisdom, when he can teach with ease, as it is of a mans perfect age, when he can generate. There being not then found, either amongst the gods, or amongst men, any who have taught either a more high, or a more profitable wisdom, or with greater facility then Christ hath done, it follows, that he is the most wise above all. We know
how

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how obscure the doctrine of Philosophers is, and with what great difficulty, and how long a time it is in learning, and that too with the mixture of many errors; whence it is that the Masters themselves are oftentimes doubtfull in the things which they teach: as for example when they treat of the divine providence, and of the end of mans life, and of other things appertaining to salvation. But after that our Saviour, and most wise Master Christ Jesus appeared to the world in a short time he gave that clear light to men concerning these things, that our Children and Christian women understand them more clearly, then the Philosophers ever did or could with all their

study, and are so firm and stable in this doctrine, that they had rather suffer a thousand deaths then deny the least iota of it.

3 The power of the Agent is known to be the greater by how much it is of quicker force and of further extent, and in like manner that wisdom is acknowledged the greater by how much it converts more sinners and ignorant persons in the shorter time; because to convert prudent and ingenious men, and such as are well disposed by nature or custome, is no mark of such great power and wisdom. But this is the great demonstration of wisdom indeed, when not onely the wise and well disposed, but men of mean wits, children and women are wrought upon.

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upon in a short time, and when the most grievous and flagitious sinners and harlots are suddenly converted to the rule of a good life. This then having been done by Christ alone, not in a few, but in infinite multitudes of men, and that in all the parts of the world, 'tis manifest that there is no wisdom comparable to his.

4 It is accounted no great matter to work in naturall things by the means of nature, as for an Angel to burn a house by fire, but if he should do it by water, it would be lookt upon as a great thing indeed. 'Tis a great signe then that that vertue is the most high and infinite, which can do whatever is naturall, and all other things without the help of
any.

any other cause, and that can work with every sort of instrument even those things which are contrary to the nature of such instruments. To teach wisdom therefore according to the due and usuall manner as Philosophers do, is a thing not to be much admired, but to teach it by contraries, namely by such things as are reputed most foolish amongst all, is that which argues great vertue indeed. This is that which Christ hath done, who by the foolishness and reproach of the cross, then which nothing was accounted more foolish and ignominious before he came, hath given the greatest wisdom to the world, herein shewing his great power that he hath plac'd the most high and

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unspeakable wisdom in the greatest and most shamefull foolishness; insomuch as daily experience shews, that he that studies not this foolish and wise book of the Cross never attains to true wisdom, and he that studies it findes so much therein that he accounts all humane wisdom foolishness. The wisdom of Christ therefore is most excellent above all other.

5 Whereas wisdom is the knowledge of things divine, herein the wisdom of Christ exceeds all other wisdom; because no other treats of divine things neither with so much height nor so amply, as appears by comparing the books of Christian Doctours with those of Philosophers. For it is well known

known that our divinitie hath purified and perfected Philosophy, and hath so diffused the knowledge of divine things, that Christians although idiots, have that with great ease which amongst Philosophers is obtained with great difficulty. And besides this, the preaching of the Apostles hath discovered the errors of the world even as a great light when it shines upon those who lie naked and filthily wallowing in darkness, that being ashamed of themselves make hast to wash away their uncleanness, and to put on their clothes. Whence it is that some Philosophers and Poets after that the light of Christ appeared were so ashamed of their idol-worship and their fables, that seeing the
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brutishness and wicked superstition of their gods discovered, being otherwise not able to give any honest account of them, they began to Allegorize them.

6 It belongs to a man of great wisdom to know high and difficult things; Christ therefore having taught such things then which none can be found higher and more difficult and having easily defended them against all the world, who can doubt but his wisdom is incomparable. Especially since men have fought against him not onely with reason, but also with the sword, and with great persecutions and most cruel Martyrdoms.

7 Certainly if Philosophers had been so fought against they would have denied even to their
very

every first Principles. Nor would they have known or been able to defend their doctrine which proceeds from naturall reason, as Christians have done theirs which proceeds from supernatural.

8 The faith is either true or false, if true the Disputation is ended. If false, we must needs say that Christ was every way a most wise man, having perswaded the world things so hard and difficult by such a manner, that no humane reason or power in so long time hath been able to rid them out of the world. And assuredly it is a wonderfull thing that having taught things above all humane capacity, nevertheless he should teach them in such manner, that no part of Philosophy

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phy is repugnant but altogether consonant to them, as our Doctours who have been most learned in Philosophy and in all the Sciences do demonstrate. For in the Christian Religion no one is forbid to study the secular Sciences, as in some superstitious sects, but they take every thing that is well said from every one, yea even from the Heathens, as from unjust possessours. If Christ then were not most wise he could not have done this, and if his doctrine had been false he could not have been able to have defended it against the force of the true Sciences, because we see Philosophers do with great difficulty teach and defend what is true from the assault of contrary reasons. And suppose it should have

have been false; Christ having defended it amidst so great contradictions, we must needs conclude that he was most wise, who by his unsearchable and subtile fallacies could draw men to so good a life, then which none better can be found. Seeing therefore that these things cannot stand together, namely, so great fallacie, and such a rectitude of life, and so great a consonancy of what is false, with the truth of doctrine; it follows, that Christ was most truly wise above all men and gods. And for this cause those who have been most approved in their life & doctrine, have exalted his wisdom above all other, not onely in their books and preaching, but with their works, & the testimony of their
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own blood: w^{ch} they would not have done if they had not been certain that this doctrine was given by God for our salvation.

9 The great vertue of a wise man appears in this, that in a short time he brings his schollers to the perfection of all the Sciences. But there is none found that hath any way done this but Christ, therefore it remains that he alone is chiefly wise. For all Science is either rational or real. Rational is Logick, Rhetorick and Poetry, the end whereof is to teach how to give reasons, and make arguments and exhortations to bend and incline the minds of men to their purpose. To which ends Christ in a very short time brought his fishermen, who by the force of their tongue
did

did that in the world, which all other wisdom and humane power could not have done. Real Science is either Practicall and Moral or speculative. As to Practicall and Moral Christ hath taught that so perfectly and with so great ease; the Christians have no further need of any thing from Philosophers. If it be Speculative, 'tis either of things divine, and these again Christ hath demonstrated so sublimely, that all the Sciences of Philosophers are as nothing compared to his. Or 'tis that which treats of numbers, and figures, as Arithmetick, and Geometry. And because this nothing conduceth to teach men to live well of it self, the wisdom of Christ hath made no mention

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mention hereof, unless of certain numbers and figures inasmuch as Allegorically they may serve thereunto, and so from these it takes likewise all that may make for a holy life. Or 'tis that which treats of things sensible, the end whereof is to bring man to the speculation of things intelligible, which thing is wonderfully done in Christs doctrine, who useth visible things in all his discourse, as glasses and images of things invisible. Inso-much that it appears, that Christ alone was most wise, who so easily hath brought the world to the perfection of the sciences.

Lastly, the delights of the understanding being greater then those of the sense, and amongst those of the understanding, the de-

delights of the contemplation of the first truth being greater then all other. Where there is the greatest delight and love, there must needs be the greatest wisdom, which consists in the knowledge and contemplation of the first truth. Seeing therefore there was never found even to this time, any greater contemplation and delight, then that of the first truth; because we see by experience, that for this men leave all the delights of the world, insomuch that whilest they live in the flesh, their life shews that they are as angels out of the flesh, not deigning to regard these earthly things, nor being troubled with any tribulation. It follows from this, that Christ is most wise above every man,
and

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and there being found neither amongst men, nor the gods of the heathen, greater wisdom then his, it follows, that he is the true God, and the wisdom of the eternal Father, as Christians say.

CHAP. XV.

*The truth of the faith confirmed,
by reasons grounded upon Christs
goodness.*

WE have shewed that Jesus of Nazareth hath excelled in power and wisdom all men, and all the gods of the heathen, insomuch that if we beleeve there is a God, we cannot think that there is any other but he. It now remains, that we prove the same by reasons grounded
upon

upon his goodness: by which we will shew that this our Jesus is the chief good, and ultimate end of mans life.

But first, 'tis requisite to understand that all the operations of man, that is, those which flow from free-will, are for this end; because the desire always tends to good, either true or apparent, as to its end. Now it cannot tend to two things as to two ultimate ends, because the ultimate end does so fill the desire, that besides it there is no other thing to desire which is not ordained to it, and that which is ordained to another, we know cannot be the ultimate end. All men therefore being of the same nature, though they are not of the same knowledge and opinion, they are
all

all naturally ordained to one and the same end, that is, the blessedness whereof we have spoken above; though it falls out that all do not ordain themselves to one and the same end, because of the diversity of the opinions which they have of that end. If therefore we shall shew, that Jesus is the ultimate end, to which nature naturally is ordained, it will be manifest that he is the first truth, the first cause, the chiefest good, and true God. And that this may be the more clearly understood, we must note, that when one thing moves it self to another as its end, if any other nature unite it self thereunto that is contrary, there is no doubt but it hinders it, as when a light thing, or any

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force

force that tends upward, mingles it self with what is heavie, it will retard its motion towards the centre. Whence it is that birds although they be heavie of body, yet by vertue of their wings they move upward, but if a thing be purely heavie without any mixture of the contrary form, it will move to the centre with great swiftness. Because therefore a man is compounded of two natures, corporeal and spiritual, it comes to pass that the spiritual moves it self naturally to true blessedness; nevertheless by the mixture of the sensible part using the senses, it is many times troubled, so that it follows not that which its proper nature inclines unto. And notwithstanding it cannot be forc'd to do ill
by

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by the sensitive part, nevertheless it is much inclined thereby to inordinate things. And from this and the weakness of our understanding, arise divers opinions amongst men concerning true blessedness. If therefore we would know from the natural desire of man, wherein his blessedness consists, we must not regard the desire and inclination of those who live as beasts; but of them who live according to reason, as if we would prove whether heavie things move upward or downward; we would not prove them by birds, but by things which are purely heavie. So from the desire of those who purge themselves from the infection of the sensitive part, and who live altogether according to

L 2 reason,

reason, we may know the ultimate end of man. Seeing therefore there is no life more reasonable, nor more pure then that of Christians; it follows, that we may better know this end from the uniform desire of Christians, then of all other men. All Christians therefore desiring Christ crucified as the ultimate end of mans life, and that with the most vehement and ardent love above every other thing, it follows, that no one can reasonably say, there is any other ultimate end of man then this.

2. The ultimate end of man is his ultimate perfection, to the which the nearer a man draws, by so much he becomes the more perfect; and by how much again he becomes the more perfect,

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fect, by so much he draws the nearer to it. Seeing then that there was never found any thing in the world, to which man approaching with his understanding and affection, became more perfect in life, and in the contemplation of divine things, then Jesus Christ crucified, as experience hath manifested and daily shews; because men are more perfect, by how much they are more like him, and more imperfect by how much they more depart from him, we having always seen and daily seeing that all his adversaries are perverse men; by this it appears that he is the ultimate end of mans life.

3. The desire of the ultimate end, is most natural and unmoveable in every thing. And there-

L 3 fore

fore when men, purged from all vices, do accost any thing with desire, which they love so greatly that they esteem every thing else as nothing, and would rather loose their life then leave the love of it, it is a manifest signe, that such a thing is the ultimate end of man, since that nature well purified does unmoveably accost it. The life of Christians then being most pure, and they always accosting Christ crucified as their last end so unmoveably, that not onely they would rather loose their life then his love; but likewise that to loose their life for his love to them, is so sweet and delightfull; this sure is a manifest signe, that Christ is the first truth, and the last end of mans life: Especially since this is
not

not seen in any other thing which men desire; all other men we see are neither pure, nor love any thing more then themselves, and what they love, it is for their own profit and delight, desiring rather to loose every other thing then their life.

4. We see that all things of the same kind and nature, are ordained and inclined to one and the same end, to which they all naturally run as heavie things to the centre. And therefore 'tis a manifest signe, that Christ Jesus is the ultimate end of mans life; because there was never any thing found in the world but him; wherein men, especially the most pure, with so great uniformity & stedfastness fixed themselves, and by whom they were

so strongly bound together. For we see that all true Christians love Jesus above every thing, and in him love one another so much, that although they be of different bloud and forein countreys, nevertheless they are one heart and one soul in God, and by how much the faith of Christ more increaseth in them, by so much this bond of love does more increase, which could not be if the faith were not true; for deceits and errours are not the cause of union, but rather of discord.

5. The delights of the soul are so much the greater, by how much they draw nearer to the ultimate end by contemplation and love. But the delights which true christians have in Christ exceed all
other

other as well those of the sense as of the understanding, as we see by experience especially in the incomparable constancy of Martyrs, who have gone to the most cruel Martyrdoms with as great joy, as if they had gone to a banquet, and in the midst of their torments have most cheerfully sung psalms and hymns, which could not have been, if the delights of Christ had not excessively surpass all others; for we see that all other joyes begin to fail even in the least pang. Again, this is further apparent in the most wise and learned in all Sciences, who after they had tasted the sweetness of the holy Scriptures and of Christ, left all study as well of Philosophy as Oratory, which appeared to

L 5 them

them afterwards as unfavoury, in comparison of the doctrine of Christ, which we have proved in many excellent men. From this therefore it appears, that the delights of Christ have surpassed all others, and that according to the foundation laid above, they proceed from the greater appropinquation to the ultimate end. Seeing therefore that they proceed from the appropinquation to Christ crucified, we must needs say, that he is the true and ultimate end of mans life.

Lastly, That we may comprehend all the properties of the ultimate end in one reason, let us proceed thus. All things of the same nature being naturally ordained to the same ultimate and next end to that nature, we must
needs.

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needs say that all men because they are of the same kinde, are ordained to some one thing, which is the ultimate end of mans nature. And however it be hard to finde that thing, we cannot rationally say, but it is that to which all the conditions and properties of the ultimate end of such a nature do agree, and those are, namely, That all those who are more pure, and more truly men then others, do uniformly and unmoveably agree that such a thing is the ultimate end, and do so much conjoyn themselves to it in love, that they love it more then themselves, that neither by any reason or force they suffer themselves to be drawn from it, whereunto by how much they draw

draw nearer, by so much they become more perfect in their lives, and in the contemplation of divine things, and wherein they delight so much, that they account every other thing as dirt and dung, that they may therein finde the peace and tranquillity of their minde, in such manner that if there be any happiness on earth, there can be no other given then this. Seeing therefore there was never any thing found wherein all these properties are conjoynd, but onely Christ crucified, it followes that no one can rationally say, but he is the first cause, and the chiefest good, and the ultimate end of mans life. But what need we to insist upon things which are so manifest, for since we see that
that

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that which is good voluntarily diffuseth its goodness, we must needs say that the chiefest good chiefly diffuseth his goodness: seeing therefore there was never seen a greater communication and distribution of divine graces, then that which Christ hath made in the world, we ought not to doubt but Christ is the chiefest good, for after the coming of Christ the world was purged from its errours, and replenisht with all vertue and holiness of life. And so great graces hath he communicated to every one that is converted to him, that if there be any blessedness to be found on earth it cannot be but in the life of true Christians, as we have prov'd in our little Treatise of the simplicity of the Christian life.

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Moreover the great goodness of our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, may be easily known by his incomparable clemency and mercy, because he never denied nor defer'd his grace to any sinner, though the most wicked, who gave himself to repentance, but rather many times where sin abounded there his grace abounded, and we have found by experience, that every one that departs from his love, leaves off also to live well, and looseth the sweetness of peace and delight of the heart, and after that he recollects himself and turns again to repentance, he acquires by his mercy the grace to live well, and the comfort and quiet of his minde as at first. What goodness then can be compared to this?

CHAP. XVI.

*That the faith is true by reasons
grounded upon the power, wis-
dome, and goodness of Christ
together.*

AND to the end we may the more easily understand what we have said of the power and wisdom, and goodness of Christ; we will binde them together in few words. We say then, that Christ having made himself God, we must needs say that if he be not God, he was the most proud and foolish of all men. And if any should say that not he, but his Disciples found out this deceit, as some men of little judgement say, I would know how so great power, wisdom, and goodness, then
which

which no greater can be thought on, can stand with such deceit. For if Christ be not God, who else can we say is God.

2 If God preserve and govern all inferiour things by due means: there having never been found any more perfect mean whereby to live well, then the faith and love of our Saviour Christ Jesus, I cannot see how we can avoid but we must confess that he is the true mean whereby we must come to Blessedness, or that indeed we must deny the divine justice and providence, or say that every thing is by chance, or by a fatal order, and so wholly deny that God is, which things being absurd, we must necessarily confess that the faith of Christ is true.

3 If

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3 If there be any true Religion in the world, as we have proved above, there being none that is confirmed with such reasons, and so efficacious as the Christian is, who can deny that this is the true religion, otherwise it would follow there should be no true religion at all in the world.

4 We know that no religion hath been so strongly and so continually opposed as this, because we know, that other religions or rather superstitions, have not met with such resistance as ours, and yet without any resistance at all, yea even in fighting against ours they have failed of themselves, whilest ours hath always increast amongst so great oppositions, and as gold, hath been

been more purified in the fire, which things could not stand, if it were false.

5 It is most manifest that the Christian religion hath not suffered persecution by just and good men, but by those that were sacrilegious and evil, who could be instigated hereunto by none but the devil, as appears likewise in these present times, which thing we see never befell any other religion, and therefore it cannot be said but that this onely is the true.

6 It was never seen in any other religion that men embraced it upon such conditions, namely that they should know that hereby they should not get riches, or honours, or pleasures, but rather poverty, reproach, martyr-

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martyrdome, and death. And yet nevertheless upon these conditions innumerable persons of all conditions have been converted to the Christian religion, as is abovesaid, which thing could not be if the promises therein tendred were not true. By these and the like reasons every man ought to beleve the faith of Christ to be true. For if one, or two, or three, or a few reasons do not constrain the understanding, nevertheless if all together be sincerely considered, they will give in no less evidence then the demonstrations, and manifest arguments of Mathematicians; or the seeing of a dead man raised from the grave.

If then the Christian religion be true, we must needs say, that
every

every other religion is false. For it testifieth (as it were) in every place, that without faith no one can be saved. Which thing is very reasonable, because our salvation and blessedness, consisting in the vision and fruition of God, to which no one can come, but by the supernatural gift of faith, the holy Scripture saith with reason, that without faith no one can please God. Nor can any complain for this, or excuse himself; no not they which are born in the most remote parts of the earth, where the faith is not named; because every man having natural reason, wherein the knowledge of God is implanted, which further manifests it self in the order of corporeal creatures, if man would live according to reason

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reason, and apply himself to God, for help, as nature instigates every thing to turn it self to its cause: certainly the Almighty, who is the chiefest goodness, and never fails in what is necessary to any Creature, though unreasonable, would much less fail man in such things which are necessary to salvation, but would enlighten him therewith, either by internal inspiration, as he did *Job*; or by the ministry of angels, as he did *Cornelius* the Centurion; or by some preacher, as he did the Eunuch by *Philip*; so that by some means or other he would preserve him from perishing.

Preface



Preface to the III Book,
shewing the order of
proceeding therein.

V*VE have plainly shewed the truth of the Christian Religion, by reasons grounded upon the works of Christ, as well past as present. But because it sufficeth not to raise and build up our own things, unless therewithall we defend them against those who seek to destroy them: It remains that we answer our adversaries, in shewing, that our Religion hath nothing in it, which is impossible or unreasonable, although it beleeves many things which exceed mans capacity. And that we may proceed orderly,*
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the Articles of the faith being the foundation of our doctrine, we will first speak of these, afterwards we will assigne the reasons of the Moral precepts; thirdly, we will speak of the reasonableness of the judicial: and lastly, of the Sacraments. because these four contain the whole Christian doctrine. And although our most excellent Doctours have treated elegantly and copiously of these things, no one yet ought therefore to think this our Book to be superfluous, both because it doth duly follow the former, without which this our endeavour would remain maimed and imperfect; and also because our Doctors have dispersed these things in divers places very diffusedly, and with marvellous subtiltie, which we will reduce to a more brief and easie understanding,

as far as shall be necessary to this present work, to satisfie not onely such Christians as are learned, but the illiterate, and unbeleivers also: who (we beleeve) will more willingly reade these things thus gathered together, then search them in books where they are scattered with such prolixity, as is accommodated to the difficulty of the matter.

C H A P.

 THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAP. I.

That God hath in himself, and can do, infinite things which exceed the capacity of mans understanding.

WE may easily know by the weakness of mans understanding, that there are infinite things in God which surpass mans capacity. For the vertue of every thing is known in its last effect, and the utmost effect of our understanding is beleeved to have been in the most excellent Philosophers; in whom, some naturalists say, nature shewed all her power; and yet nevertheless

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theless (as they themselves freely confess) they have purchased with great labour little, and very uncertain knowledge of natural things which are under the heaven. If nature therefore, having imployed all its force, hath produced so little knowledge in the things wherewith we converse every day, how much less do we beleieve it will effect in heavenly things; and much less still in things spiritual and Angelical. And what shall we say then of the things of God, which are infinitely elevated above all humane understanding? 'tis therefore very credible that there are infinite things in God above the reach of mans wit.

We see also, that amongst men who are of the same kinde
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the difference is so great, that some are of so gross a wit, that although they should take never so great pains, yet they would never be able to understand those high things which Philosophers do. How much more then may we imagine, that there are many things in the understanding of Angels, whereof no man in the world is capable, they being so far exalted above mankind. And since God is so infinitely exalted above them, who can doubt, but that there are infinite things in God above the capacity of mans reason. And although by the effects we may know the causes, yet when the causes do greatly exceed their effects, the effect cannot manifest his cause but very imperfectly.

God therefore being infinitely high above all that is effected by him, we must needs say that in a natural way, we have very little, yea, no knowledge at all of divine things.

And that God can further do infinite things whereof mans wit is not capable, is not hard to prove, because all our knowledge beginning at the sense, our understanding naturally can reach as far as it is conducted by sensible things, whence it is (we see) that it knows nothing beyond the imagination, and the order of natural things, and although it would force it self never so much it cannot go out of this order, because it is naturally tied thereunto as long as it continues in this present life. Seeing therefore

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fore that God is a pure act and an infinite power, he cannot be tied to any order, but must infinitely exceed all created things, as wel spiritual, as corporeal. And therefore we must necessarily confess, that he can do infinite things, to the knowledge whereof our understanding cannot reach, especially since we see, that in the order of the universe he hath done many, and as it were infinite things, (especially such as are Spiritual and Angelical) which we cannot understand.

Nevertheless it is to be observed, that the divine goodness hath duly manifested it self unto men, and moreover done many supernatural things in the world, whereof no humane wit was ca-

pable. *First*, For the necessity of mans salvation, because man being ordained to a supernatural end, he could not have come to it; unless it had been revealed by God, together with the means to attain it. *Secondly*, To make man more humble, that hereby he might the better acknowledge his own infirmity, in comparing it to the abyffe of the divine Majesty, especially when he sees, that he cannot know or contemplate the things which are revealed, unless very imperfectly and at a distance. Certainly hereby man will become more humble, and bear a greater reverence to divine things. *Thirdly*, by Gods manifestation unto men of divers secrets in divers ways, (as appears
in

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in the holy Scriptures) man hath
attained unto a great delight of
the things that are eternal, and
of the divine goodness and con-
descension towards us. No one
therefore must make a mock of
the things which Christians be-
leeve, because humane wit can-
not reach them: but he ought ra-
ther to read, and well to under-
stand their grounds, because he
shall find nothing therein which
is either impossible or unrea-
sonable. And that this may be the
more manifest, we will descend
to particulars.

CHAP. II.

Of the Articles which the Christian religion beleeves, above the capacitie of mans wit.

Concerning the things which Christians beleeeve, some appertain to the divinity of Christ, and others to his humanity. As to the *Divinity*, they beleeeve that there are not more gods, but one onely God, and that he is the Authour of the Christian doctrine, to the knowledge of whom, the learned do not onely attain by faith, but by science also, as we have shewed in our first book. *Secondly*, with this Unity of God, they beleeeve also the Trinity, that is, that the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost, are one God and three per-

persons : and these two Articles have respect to the divine essence. The others relate to the works done by him. And as to the works of nature , the *third* Article defines that God hath created , that is , made every thing of nothing. As to the works of supernatural grace, the *fourth* Article saith, that 'tis God alone who sanctifies the reasonable creature by the means of his supernatural gifts , thereby to draw him to himself. As to the works of glory ; and first, concerning the glory of the soul, the *fifth* Article determines , that those who are sanctified by him, shall be glorified after their death in blessedness, and supernatural enjoyments : secondly, concerning the glory of the body , the

sixth Article promiseth the resurrection, the immortality and glorification of the bodies of the blessed, and the damnation of reprobates. Concerning the *Humani-
ty* of Christ, we beleeve, first, that he is true God and true man, the Son of God, and the son of the virgine Mary, conceived, and born of her by virtue of the holy Ghost: secondly, that he was crucified, dead, and buried for our salvation: thirdly, that he descended into hell: fourthly, that he arose from death to life gloriously: fifthly, that he ascended into the heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty: sixthly, that he will come again to judge the quick and the dead, and to renew the whole world. So
that

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that all our faith consists in these twelve principles; although further, we beleve whatsoever is contained in the holy Scriptures, that is in the books which our Doctours call Canonical. Proceeding therefore according to the order of the fore-said Articles, we will shew that our faith hath nothing in it which is impossible or unreasonable; but because we have spoken enough in our first book concerning the first Article, wherein the Philosophers, and as it were all men of the world agree with us, there is no need at present to speak further of it.

CHAP.

That the Christian religion determines not any thing of the mystery of the Trinity, which is either impossible or unreasonable.

OMitting therefore the first Principle of the Christian faith, which is the most known, we will begin at the second, the most difficult of all others, which enjoyns us to beleieve the Unity of the Trinity, namely, that the three persons, the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost, are one God, and one divine nature, not three Gods, or three natures, as some ignorantly affirm. We confesse therefore that there is one God, of a most pure nature, nor do we say any thing of him that is either inconvenient, or

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contrary to Philosophy, although above it; we confess the same one God to be Father, Son, and holy Ghost; not one person, as the arch-heretick *Sabellius* said, who because of divers effects is sometimes called the Father, sometimes the Son, and sometimes the holy Ghost; nor three persons substantially different, as *Arrius* said, who most impiously would have the Son to be less and later then the Father, and the holy Ghost to be less and inferiour to the Father and the Son. But we go the middle way, which is the way of truth, and confess the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost to be three distinct persons, against *Sabellius*; and that they are of the same nature, power, and glory, against *Arri-*

Arrius: in such manner, that all whatsoever the Father hath, the Son and the holy Ghost have; and all whatsoever the Son hath, the Father and the holy Ghost have; and all whatsoever the holy Ghost hath, the Father and the Son have. Whence it is, that among the divine persons there is not a distinction as among the creatures, who are distinguished because one hath something which another hath not; but the distinction that is among them is onely relative, namely, that all that which the Father hath, he hath it not of another; but the Son who hath all the same that the Father hath, he hath it of the Father; and all that same hath the holy Ghost from the Father and the Son. Nor for this are
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the Son and the holy Ghost less than the Father, because they have the whole nature and all the dignity of the Father: nor were the Father and the Son before the holy Ghost, because God being immutable and eternal, the Father was not before he was a Father, but he always was God and Father; and since he cannot be a Father without a Son, we must needs say that the Son was coeternal with him. And in like manner the holy Ghost being love, and the Father and the Son having always loved each other, we must confess that they never were without the spiration of the holy Ghost. Nor do we hereby make any composition in the divine essence, because we beleeve every person to be the same

same thing with the divine nature. And this is that which cannot be understood by humane reason, namely, that God is a pure act and most simple substance; and nevertheless that in him there are three persons distinguished, in such manner that one is not another; namely, that the Father is not the Son; nor the Son the Father, nor the holy Ghost the Father and the Son, nor the Father and the Son the holy Ghost; and yet the Father is that very same simple nature which the Son is, and the Son that same which the Father is, and the holy Ghost that which the Father and the Son is, because there is in God a personal distinction, but not according to the nature.

Seeing

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Seeing therefore that we name things as we know them, our knowledge of God being by the creatures, we call him by such names as we take from the creatures. Now in the creatures the emanation of one living thing from another, after the likeness of the same nature, is called generation, and he that begets is called the father, and he that is begotten the son. And therefore in God, one living person proceeding from another in one and the same nature, we call such a procession generation, and the person from which another proceeds, is called the Father, and the person proceeding the Son. This generation therefore is not as that of animals and men; but it is altogether spiritual and divine:

vine: Whence it is that we say; the Son is the Word, the image, and the wisdom begotten by the Father. But the procession of the holy Ghost, who is love, comes from the Father and the Son; because love is the union of the lover with that which is beloved by him, and so the holy Ghost proceeds immediately from two persons most perfectly, that is, from the Father and the Son. But because in natural things nothing proceeds from two things equally perfect, there could not be found out a special name for the holy Ghost and his procession, therefore we retain the general name and call it *procession*, although on the Fathers part and the Sons it is specially called *spiration*,
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because the holy Ghost proceeds after the manner of love, and this shewes a certain force and breathing towards the thing beloved, for which reason further the person proceeding from the Father and the Son is specially called the holy Spirit, notwithstanding the Father is a spirit, and holy likewise as well as he, and so is the Son too. And because the processions which are in the intellectual nature are but two, the one by way of the understanding, the other by way of the will, the Christian faith does rationally place in God but two processions and three persons.

Of this holy Trinity we have spoken onely that which appertains to the substance of faith,
and

and he that desires to make a more subtile search let him read our holy Doctours, and he shall finde an infinite treasure, it is sufficient for us at present to demonstrate that our faith teacheth nothing concerning the holy Trinity that is impossible or unreasonable, although it teacheth that by natural reason we cannot attain the knowledge thereof: because natural reason riseth no higher to the knowledge of God, then as he is the beginning and cause of all created things; God, being therefore the beginning and cause of things by his power, wisdom and goodness onely, wherein the divine persons are united and not distinguished, it follows that by the creatures we cannot come to know the di-
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stinction of the divine persons, however for this we must not therefore not beleieve it, in regard that we are not able to understand it; because it is a folly to think that that cannot be true, which our understanding cannot measure.

Seeing therefore (as we have said) that there are infinite things in God which are unsearchable by mans understanding, as is evident, if we consider the reasons alledged in the second book; we cannot doubt of the faith of the holy Trinity. In which faith notwithstanding we are assisted by many special reasons, whereof we will produce some to shew, that what we have said of the Trinity, although it be above reason, yet it is not
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contrary to it, but that it hath great probability and likeness even with natural things. And that, *First*, because every effect labouring to imitate its cause, from the processions or emanations of the Creatures, we may in some sort elevate our understanding to consider the divine processions; for we finde many processions in the Creatures, which by so much are the more perfect and intrinsecal, by how much they are in a more perfect nature. As for example, there is a certain kinde of generation in inanimate things, as we see that one fire generates another, because the vertue of the fire generating passeth to the fire generated, however such a procession is imperfect and not intrin-

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trinfecal, because it does not remain in the matter generating, but passeth to that which is out of it self. But in plants which are animated we finde a more perfect and intimate proceffion, because that which is generated from a plant proceeds from what is intrinfecal to it, and in the beginning of its generation is conjoyn'd and made as it were the same thing with it, but because afterwards in the end it is separated from it, this proceffion is not fully perfect, and intrinfecal. In animals therefore that are more perfect then plants, there is a more perfect and intrinfecal proceffion, which is rather spiritual then corporeal, and this is, the operations and acts of the senses which remain within the
senses

senses themselves, nevertheless because they are caused by some extrinsecall object, this proceffion yet is not altogether inward. But that of the understanding is more perfect and intimate, because that after the understanding hath comprehended the things which it understands by it self, it maketh its own operation within it self, without any outward help, and forms the word, and the likeness of what it knows, breaking forth likewise into the love of it in such manner, that therein we may see the likeness of the holy Trinity. Which is the understanding, the word and love. But because all our knowledge proceeds from the sense, the proceffion of the understanding is not altogether from

from what is intrinsecal, but it comes also from what is extrinsecal; if we then go higher to the Angelical understanding, we shall finde a more intrinsecal and perfect proceſſion of the word, and love; but the understanding of Angels doth not proceed from the ſenſes, but is altogether inward: however becauſe the Angels depend on God, we cannot ſay, that the proceſſions of the word and love are ſo intrinsecal in them, but that they depend on ſomething that is extrinsecal, and therefore they have ſome imperfection. We ſeeing then, that by how much the creatures are more noble, by ſo much they are more intrinsecal and more perfect, the effect always labouring to imitate its cauſe,

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certainly, that which the faith confesseth is no irrational thing : namely, that in God, who in nobleness infinitely exceeds all the creatures, there are most perfect processions, and such as are most especially intimate, which do not proceed from any outward thing; nor are different from his substance, and which all the creatures labour to imitate, although they sufficiently fail of that perfection, because the divine persons do not depend of any thing, they being God, who is the cause of every thing.

Again, the similitude of the Trinity shews it self in the spiritual part of man (as is above-said) in the understanding, the word, and love; especially because that when man actually
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contemplates God, there follows from such a contemplation a certain divine Trinity in his minde; because in the place of the Father is the understanding informed with the divine light and presence, in the place of the Son is the conception which is the form of God in that contemplation, which is called the word of the minde; in place of the holy Ghost is the divine love, which proceeds from the foresaid understanding and conception of God in that contemplation. True it is, that this Trinitie is exceedingly distant and different from that of God, because our word, and our love is changeable, and is not the substance of the soul: Nevertheless, by this it appears, that 'tis not void of rea-

son to place a Trinitie in God, seeing that in noble creatures there is so great a similitude thereof.

And this is further confirm'd, because a certain similitude of the Trinity is found not onely in noble, but in ignoble creatures likewise, in regard that the perfection of every creature consists in three things; namely, in the beginning, mean, and end: the beginning belongs to the Father, the mean or middle part to the Son, and the end to the holy Ghost. In like manner in all the creatures, there are these three things, substance, vertue, and operation. And many other similitudes likewise may be found, by which we see, that in all the creatures there is a certain impressi-

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pression of the Trinity; and it
appears that all desire to imitate
this number, as if their perfecti-
on consisted herein. Wherein
Aristotle the prince of the Peri-
pateticks, the great searcher out
of natural things, affords us
some help, who led by reason,
not faith, in his book of the
heaven and the world, much com-
mends the number of *Three*, say-
ing that every substance appears
to be perfect in this number:
whereupon he brings in the Py-
thagoreans, who say that every
thing is perfected and determin'd
in this number; namely, in the
beginning, middle, and end.
And he subjoyns afterward, say-
ing, that this number was trans-
fer'd from natural things to the
hallowing of the Gods, and that

in the nomination of men, if there be onely two, we do not say *all* these, but if you add the third, we incontinently say *all* these, as if without the third there were no perfection; whence the whole and what is perfect seem to be the same thing. And he subjoyns further, that bodies are a perfect quantitie, because they are compounded of three things, of length, breadth, and depth.

It appears then by these similitudes, and the reasons above-said, that our faith concerning the holy Trinity, sayes nothing that is impossible or unreasonable, but that which is very probable and credible, even according to humane reason, especially seeing that though it beleieve things above

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bove humane capacitie, yet it
sayes nothing which is contrary
to the principles of natural Phi-
losophy, but makes this to serve
to solve such reasons, which seem
contrary hereunto that the ad-
versaries thereof alledge, which
is a manifest signe of the truth
of it.

C H A P. IV.

*That the Christian faith affirms
nothing impossible or unreason-
able concerning the creation.*

NOW that we have consider-
ed supernatural things,
which appertain to the divine
nature in it self, we will treat of
those things which belong there-
unto by respect had to the crea-
tures,

tures. And first, as to the natural being of every thing. Whereas we confess that God hath created all things in time, namely, that a certain principle hath made all things visible and invisible of nothing; this is neither estranged from reason nor truth, every one confessing that God is the first efficient cause, on which the heaven and nature depends: now what other thing does the efficient cause, then to give being to its effects. Seeing then, that by how much a cause is more perfect, by so much it extends its action to more things, and such as are more remote. God being a pure and most perfect act, we must needs say, that his power extends to the being of every thing, and that all things depend of him, And

And also, that although in things which are produced upon the earth, imperfection precedes perfection; yet if we speak absolutely, perfection precedes imperfection, because every imperfect thing depends of that which is perfect. God being then a pure and most perfect act, he must necessarily precede every thing, and every thing must be made by him.

But that we do rightly beleeve all things to be made of nothing, without presupposing any matter, appears, because although nature, and art, and other particular agents, have need of matter in their operations; nevertheless God who is the most universal cause to which all effects answer, gives being to all things, because

this effect of being which is most universal, cannot correspond but to the most universal cause, which is God, and therefore nothing can avoid the infinite largeness of this cause, but must have its being from him. If you should say then, that the things which were made by him, were not made of nothing, but of some matter, I would ask of you, whether the matter were made by him, or no; you cannot say no, for the reasons above-said, because every thing is made and depends of him. If it then be made by him, either it is made of nothing, or of some matter. If you say, of nothing, we are agreed; if you say of some matter, I ask you further of that matter, God having made it by the reasons above-said,

said, whether it was made by him of nothing, or of some other thing; if you say of nothing, we have what we intended; if of something, we return again to our first question, and so you must need either grant, that that matter of which God made all things, was either made of nothing, or you must say that there are infinite matters, whereof one presupposeth another; and that none can ever come to the first, which is either unreasonable, or to make a circle in disputation, as for instance: If the earth should be made of water, and the water of aire, and the aire of fire, that the fire after should be made of earth: as fools use to dispute. We must needs therefore hold to the first: namely, that all things

things were made of nothing at the first, and that afterwards of the matter first created, other things were produced and generated. And because God does not work by necessitie of nature, but by his own proper will as we have proved above, 'tis not necessary that we say, the world was created from all eternity; but in that time which was judged most fit by the divine wisdom. Now that it was convenient to God, and profitable to man, that the world should be created in time, (saving always the unsearchable and hidden counsel of the divine Majestie) we may shew by some reason. Because God having made all things for the good of his elect, which consists especially in his knowledge, there

there arises a more perfect knowledge of God in man for having created the world in time, then if he had created it from eternitie: because hereby man better understands the perfection of God, namely, how fully blessed he is of himself, and that he hath not need of any creature; because if it were not so, he would not have been such an infinite space of time without creatures; and from hence ariseth a greater reverence and subjection in man to God. Insomuch that it appears that our faith saith nothing of the Creation, but what is most rational: and this thing we have expedited the more briefly, because our Doctours have treated of it sufficiently, most easily solving all the reasons of *Aristotle*,
and

and the other Philosophers, who laboured to prove the eternity of the world, demonstrating that they were most frivolous, as is known to every one, though meanly learned in this matter.

C H A P. V.

That the Christian faith sayes nothing impossible or unreasonable, of the sanctification, glory, and resurrection of the reasonable Creature.

CONCERNING the sanctification of the reasonable creature by the gift of grace, I think we need say no more then that which hath been above-said, Of the end of mans life, and the means to attain it: because

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cause we have shewed that man is ordained to a supernatural end, to which he cannot come but by the divine grace, which God ministers to all who prepare themselves to receive it, in regard that God is never wanting in things necessary to his creatures.

In like manner we have spoke sufficiently above, of the glory of our soul, when we shewed the end of mans life to be the vision of the divine essence, by vertue of the light of glory. From what therefore is above written, we may easily understand, that our faith affirms nothing of the sanctification and glory of the reasonable creature which is impossible, but that which is full of all reason and probability.

And the same we may say
like-

likewise of the resurrection of the dead. For although this cannot be naturally, because nature is determined to one way of working, and cannot enliven a man otherwise, then by the way of generation: nevertheless; we having already proved the divine power to be infinite, and that God is not tied to the order of the Universe: but that he can do innumerable other things infinite manner of ways; who can doubt but that the Resurrection of the dead is not onely possible but very easie unto God: for if God have created every thing of nothing, what wonder is it if he raise the dead, and make something of that which is, especially since man does not so die, that he becomes nothing, but
that

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that his soul remains immortal, as we have proved above, and that the matter of the bodie although it be resolved into another, remains yet in the world. And admit yet further, that it should resolve into nothing, it would be as easie to God to recal the whole man again to life, as it was to make the world of nothing: So that what we beleieve of the Resurrection of the dead, is not impossible or inconvenient, but reasonable, expedient, and necessary, if we will rightly consider it; because our soul being the form of the body, and immortal, it cannot stand always separated from the body, because this is violent to it, and against nature; and that which is against nature, cannot be perpetual: for
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it does not agree to the divine wisdom. We must therefore necessarily say, that sometime it will return again to the body.

Again, our soul hath no perfect being without the body, and every imperfect thing desires its perfection; if then the soul should not return again to the body, it could never be perfectly blessed, because that desire, being natural to it, cannot be removed from it. Seeing therefore, that it is inconvenient to say our soul cannot be perfectly blessed; we must therefore necessarily confess the resurrection from the dead.

Again, blessedness belongs to them who live rightly, but in this life the soul doth not properly live but the man, whence
the

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the life, understanding, and other operations are attributed to the whole man and not to the soul onely, because the man is he that doth them, and the soul is the form by vertue whereof he doth them. And therefore blessedness is due to the whole man who lives well, which could not be if there were not a resurrection of the dead.

Again, it belongs to the divine providence to reward the good and punish the evil; the good having therefore done good, and the wicked evil, not onely with their soul but also with their body, it appertains to divine providence and justice which is most perfect, to reward and punish as well the bodies as the souls; especially since the
bodies

bodies of good men have been afflicted and tormented for the love of him, and that wicked men for the love of the world have given themselves to corporeal delights and pleasures. The divine justice not suffering any good to go unrewarded, nor evil unpunished; it appears how reasonably and necessarily our faith speaks of the resurrection.

Furthermore, it is very reasonable to beleieve that our bodies are to rise again immortal, because if those that rise again should die another time, by the aforesaid reasons 'tis clear that they must needs rise again another time, and if they were afterwards to die again and rise again, we must needs say that either
they

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they should infinite times die again and rise again, which is a thing unreasonable; or that they should rise again immortal, which is very consonant to reason. And because the matter must be proportioned to its form, the souls of the blessed being full of the light of glory, it would be an unworthy thing, that they should be joyned to a glorified body, which should not be wholly subject to the soul. And therefore our faith rationally saith, that by the power of God the glory of the soul shall redound to the body, and the body shall be full of agility, and wonderfully obedient to the soul, and perfect in every part. And because all bodies are made for man who is the end of all natural things,

things, the faith doth most conveniently say, that man being glorified, the whole world shall be likewise glorified, that the things which are ordained to the end may be proportioned to it. And because man then shall have no further need of meat or other corporeal nourishment, we do reasonably say, that the heaven shall move no more, and that the living creatures, and the plants, and other mixt things shall be resolv'd into the elements; which shall be purged by the subtiltie and vertue of the fire, and cloath themselves with a new and glorious brightness, and we shall ever remain in blis with the Lord.

C H A P. VI.

That the Christian religion speaks conveniently of the pains of the damned.

AS the place of the glorious heaven is most convenient for the blessed, so the lowest place of the earth for the damned, who always kept themselves at the greatest distance from God, wherein they shall be always punished for their sins. Nor ought it to seem an unjust thing to any, that the pains of the damned are perpetual, though their sins were but temporal; because as humane justice, which is less perfect than divine, fitly punisheth some temporal sins with perpetual punish-

punishment, as with perpetual banishment, or death, so it is most agreeable to the divine justice to deprive some for ever of eternal glory, and perpetually to punish them in hell; not so much for the transitory sin, as for the malignity of their will, which remained firm in sin even unto death. Certainly 'tis a reasonable thing, that he who hath prefer'd temporal delights before the fruition of eternal glory, and would have persevered in pleasure, if it had been granted to him even for ever, should be punished with everlasting pain: and especially since man is out of this present life, and at the end of his journey, wherein he hath lost the power which he had to have acquir'd eternal life. And because

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cause as we have said, the whole man is that which works, and not the soul alone, 'tis reasonable that the damned be punished in their soul, and in their body, as it is reasonable that the blessed be glorified both in the one and the other. And although in hel there be other pains then that of fire, nevertheless because fire is most active, this amongst other pains is more mentioned, as being the most principal. However, we must know, that the bodies of the damned shall not be burnt or consumed by the foresaid fire: for by the divine power, there shall be given so great vertue to their souls, that they shall keep their bodiessentire from all corruption; but because by reason of their evil will, they are so averse from

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their Creatour, their bodies shall not be wholly subject to their souls, and therefore they may be tormented, by corporeal fire; which being granted, that it cannot dissolve the complexion thereof, yet by the excellency of its quality, it shall be so opposite to the equality of the complexion, and connatural harmony of the senses, that it shall give them intollerable and continual pain.

Yet we must not conceive, that the evil spirits are punished in this very same manner by fire, but they are tormented after another manner, namely, by the manner of alligation, as is seen sometimes in enchantments and witchcrafts, that the inferiour devils are tied by the power of the superiour, and as it were put in
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prison in certain pictures, images, and other the like things. If then by the power of the greater devils, the lesser are tied to things corporeal, how much more can God tie all the said spirits to material fire; which will be a most grievous pain to them, when they shall see themselves deprived of eternal felicitie, and against their nature tied to the lowest things; and possibly this fire, as the instrument of the divine justice, may give them other pain, which, as we cannot perfectly know spirits in this world, so neither can we find it out.

CHAP. VII.

That the Christian religion sayes nothing concerning the incarnation of the Son of God which is impossible, undecent, or unreasonable.

THe Christian religion further inviolably beleevs, that God the Son of God is man, and that his person is subsisting in two natures, namely, in the divine and in the humane, between which there is made such and so great an union, that the very same person which is God is man also. To which union there is no created thing that we can liken, because we cannot finde in the creatures, that one perfect substance is so strongly united to another, that what is said of the one,

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one may be truly said of the other ; as when a mans garment^t is united to him, we cannot say that the garment is a man , nor the man a garment, and notwithstanding the soul is strongly united to the body, nevertheless the union which the soul hath with the body, is not like to the union of the Word to the humane nature , because the Word cannot be the form of the humane nature, as the soul is of the body, in regard that the form is an imperfect thing , and God is most perfect : and besides this , the Divine nature and the Humane nature are two perfect substances in Christ, and therefore this union passeth all understanding. However, we must not therefore think that it is

impossible, because God can do much more then that which we can understand; nor is this such a thing as cannot be done, for the divine Majesty is changed in nothing by such an union, but the humane nature is elevated by his infinite power to a wonderfull union of his person. Nor, further, was this union unreasonable, but very convenient, because infinite blessings are derived thereby to all the world, as experience hath shewed. And in regard tis impossible to rehearse all the benefits which God hath bestowed on mans nature by means of this Incarnation, that we may declare the convenience hereof, we will onely mention some of them.

First, this union was the most
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effectual remedy to bring man to his blessedness, which consisting in the vision of the divine essence, this vision happily might have been impossible for man to have attained unto, because of the sublimitie of the divine Majesty and the lowness of our understanding, if God had not united the humane nature to the divine in person, which is a greater union then that of the understanding of the blessed to the divine essence; this therefore gives hope that men may come to so great a glory, whence we see, that after this Incarnation men began to aspire to blessedness more then at first.

Again, by this Incarnation man hath gained a greater knowledge of his excellence, in

seeing his nature immediately united to God, because hereby he understands, that no creature, but God alone is his end; and therefore when this wonderfull union appear'd unto the world, men left the worshipping of Idols and of all the creatures, and despising the riches, pleasures and honours of this world, they sought after the true worship and true blessedness.

Moreover, blessedness exceeding the faculty of our understanding, we could have no certain knowledge or hope of it by natural reason, as appears in the search of the most excellent Philosophers, which in this part was vain. And therefore God who hath a special providence over men conveniently took
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humane flesh to certifie and to give man a firm hope of his blessedness, because God speaking hereof by himself, no one can doubt but that must be true which he hath said. And therefore we see, that after the Incarnation of the Son of God, men have had a greater and clearer knowledge of divine things then at first.

Again, man being much involv'd in the love of earthly things, God could not better loose him from this love, and elevate him to the love of divine things then by this Incarnation, wherein shewing that great love which he bore to mans nature, every one is excited hereby especially to love him again. And therefore we have

seen that after this great love was preached to the world, men became so inflam'd with the love of divine things, that they contracted friendship and familiarity with God and with his Angels, so that they contemn'd all humane friendship.

Furthermore, it being needfull that man should have due means to come to blessedness, which are the vertues and the perfections of the spiritual life, This benefit was given to the world by this Incarnation, which is especially prov'd by this experience: because after that Christ came, all the world began to flourish in vertue, and in the perfection of the spiritual life. In-somuch, that no one can doubt, unless he be blinde, but the way
which

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which Christ shew'd is certainly
that which brings men to bles-
sedness. See then, that the Ca-
tholick faith teacheth nothing
which is impossible or unrea-
sonable concerning the Incarnation
of the Son of God.

CHAP. VIII.

*That Christs Nativity of a Virgin
is neither impossible nor un-
reasonable, and that his life was
most convenient.*

WE having shewed the
possibility and conveni-
ency of the most difficult arti-
cles, it will not now be hard to
shew the same in the others, for
if God could be made man, it
will not be impossible that he
should.

should be made the Son of a Virgine. Where we must note, that generation terminates in the *suppositum* and not in the nature; because a woman does not generate the nature of a man, but the person subsisting in that nature. The person then of the Son of God being subsistent in the humane nature, it is not impossible that he should be born of a woman of whom he took that nature. And although God might have made that body of the earth or of any other matter, nevertheless it was more convenient that he should produce it, and cause it to be born of a woman, to the end we might be the more excited to love him, and might have a greater example of humility, seeing the Father

ther of all things, disdained not to have a mother, and parents, and a countrey here upon earth, and to conform himself to our infirmity, and to remain nine moneths in his mothers womb, and to suffer other incommodities of our humane life.

And if it should seem impossible to any, that a virgine should bring forth a son, let him consider, that the divine power exceeds all the facultie of our understanding. However, it is not difficult to understand in what manner, by the divine vertue, a virgin may conceive and bring forth, without violation of her virginity; because in natural things which have a perfect life, as plants, the Agent is not distinguished in generation from the pati-

patient: for in one and the same plant there is the generative vertue of the male and female, that is, the active and the passive vertue; but in living creatures which have a greater perfection of life, the Agent is distinct from the Patient, that is, the male from the female; and therefore without doubt, the male hath the active vertue to generate; but we say the female hath not this vertue, namely, that there is not a vertue in her to form the members of the body which is to be generated, and to dispose it to the reception of the form, but onely there is a vertue in her to minister and prepare the matter which is to receive the figure and form of a humane body, otherwise it would not be needfull, that

that the male and female should concur to generation, if one of them had both the active and passive vertue of generating.

But note, that the seed of the woman is not always so necessary to the generation of a man, as is that of the male; because it hath been found by experience, that many women have conceived without the effusion of their seed, because the menstruous blood hath interven'd instead hereof, for the heat of the woman being not so great as the mans heat is, she cannot digest so well as the man doth the superfluous part of the nourishment, which turns into seed, but that remains indigested under the form of corrupt bloud, which nature afterwards frames for the matter.

matter of mans body. God being then of an infinite power, and being able to do of himself that which he useth to do by natural causes, what impossibility doth the faith affirm, if it confess that the vertue of the holy Ghost was in stead of the active vertue of the male, and that instead of the seed or indigested bloud of the mother, he took for the matter of the humane body the most pure bloud of the virgine Mary; who having ministered the matter of the body of Christ, as other women do, why should we not as well call her the Mother of Christ, as we do other women our mothers?

Now as to the life of Christ, we say, that it was most convenient that Christ should converse with

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with men, and not lead a solitary life; because otherwise he could not by the example of his life, and by his preaching, have drawn men to a holy life, and finally to blessedness, which was the end of his coming into the world. And because it is reasonable that he that converseth with men, should conform himself to their manner of living, 'twas necessarie that Christ should not lead so austere a life as John Baptist did, but a moderate kind of life in his apparel, in his eating, and drinking, according to the custome of the countrey where he was brought up; to the end he might be more common to all men, and the better procure the salvation of all by his word and example: wherein we cannot say he wanted any
thing

thing necessary to the perfection of a spiritual life, because that doth not consist in outward austerity, but in the sincerity of the mind, and in fervent charity, by which a man becomes unmoveable in such sort, that he is not exalted in prosperity, nor dejected in adversity, but hath his mind always calm, and fixed upon eternal things.

Further, it was convenient that Christs life should be poor, to give example to preachers to disintangle themselves from worldly cares, and to live out of all suspicion of avarice, and such a life was fitting for Christ, the better to shew the power of his Divinity, that the change which he made of the whole world, might not be attributed to any secular

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secular power or wisdom, but to
the vertue onely of the divine
Majestie.

And moreover, it was reason-
able to joyn miracles to such a
life, to shew that the Godhead
truly dwelt in him. Finally, if
together with his piety and hu-
mility, we consider his words and
works, we shall find in them a
wonderfull order, and that all
were done with the greatest rea-
son.

CHAP. IX.

*That which the Christian religion
confesseth of Original sin, is
neither impossible nor without
reason.*

But to the end we may
the better understand that
which

which we have said above, and which we are to say hereafter, 'tis necessary to treat something of Original sin, wherewith our faith declares all mankind to be defiled. We have therefore shewed above, that the world was created by God in the time that pleased him best, and likewise man the principal part thereof. And because the intellective soul is immortal, and most noble, it might seem further, that an immortal body was most convenient for it, and such as might be wholly subject to it, and that the superiour nature of the form, should have bore rule over the inferiour of the matter. But because the knowledge of the intellective soul depends on the senses, & they cannot be but in a body

dy compounded of the elements, and of flesh, which is repugnant to reason, naturally such a body as we have said could not be given. However, because the divine providence doth not fail in things necessary, we beleeve, that God in the beginning when he created man, of his bounty removed such corruption and repugnancy from mans body, that the matter might be proportioned and subject to the form, and that the inferiour power of the soul might obey reason. And therefore we do rationally confess, that original righteousness was given to the first man, that is to say, an impassibility and subjection of the body to the soul, and of all the sensitive part to reason. Which righteousness after-

afterwards had been given to all men begot by him, if of his free-will subject to the divine laws, he had not turned away from God. Now it was a thing reasonable, that if man turned away himself from God, he should be deprived of original justice, and that the inferiour part of the soul should no more obey reason, and that the body should return to its mortality, it being just, that man should be punished in that wherein he sinned. The first man then having sinned, and being deprived of original justice, we call the privation of such justice original sin, which from him was transfused into all men, because all men are begot with the privation of such justice, which would have come unto them if
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the first man by his fault had not lost it.

Nor can this seem to be void of reason to any, since there appears such certain signes of this sin in all mankind : for God having such a care of humane things, that he rewards good works, and punisheth the evil; we may know, that the punishment which God sends, was for some fault w^{ch} went before. Now we see that our humane nature, as to the body, is subject to many pains, as to heat and cold, to hunger and thirst, and to other infirmities and calamities, and finally to death it self; and as to the intellectuall soul, man hath his understanding and free-will much weakened, and the flesh resisting, whereupon he daily falls

falls into many errors, and this is a signe* that there was some fault that preceded.

And although these defects, may seem natural, as if they followed the condition of our humane nature; Nevertheless, if we diligently consider the divine providence and goodness towards man, we shall easily perswade our selves, that God would have supplied these defects, if man by his fault had not laid some obstacle in the way; and therefore considering the goodness and bounty of God, we beleieve such defects to be fallen on man as a punishment of the sin of our first Parent, who sustained the person of the whole humane nature. It is not therefore without reason that we say further, the sin of
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our first Parent was Personal, & common to the whole nature; Personal, because it deprived the person of Adam of his original righteousness; Common, because the whole race of mankind was therewith deprived of it.

And if any shall think it unjust, that all should suffer for the sin of one, let him consider, That God being not bound to give man original righteousness, if he gives it to him with this condition, that if he sinned not he should preserve it to himself & to all his posterity, and if he sinned, he should be deprived of it with all the race of mankind; no man can complain, especially since there was such a covenant made with all in Adam. Nor could man have any just subject of

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complaint against God, although he had created him without hands and without feet; since God is not a debtor to any creature, so that it appears that the Christian doctrine saith nothing that is impossible or unreasonable concerning original righteousness, or original sin.

CHAP. X.

That the Christian religion doth reasonably beleevve the passion of Christ, and the other mysteries of his humanity.

BUt God, the Father of all mercies, who is rich in goodness hath provided fit remedies for the defect of original sin from the beginning of the world:

world: namely, the faith of our first Parents, and sacrifices, afterwards circumcision, and finally baptisme, &c. By which remedies men being sanctified by grace become more disposed to supernatural blessedness. And therefore men cannot complain of God that he hath not made due provisions for them, but of their Fathers and Mothers who have left them at a loss.

But possibly you may say it belongs to the goodness of God to take such satisfaction as is possible for man to give, and that which he cannot give graciously to forgive. I answer you, that we may beleeve that if it had not been possible otherwise to have remedied this defect, God of his inestimable goodness would

have accepted such a satisfaction as it had been possible for man to have given; but it being possible otherwise to satisfie the divine justice; which suffers no sin to go unpunished, he was pleased to take that way which might not onely satisfie for sin, but likewise declare his great mercy in the making of mans nature more perfect. No creature then being able to satisfie for this sin, but God alone, who was not the debter, because he had not sinned; and man owing satisfaction, who yet was not able to give it, the most mercifull, the most wise, and the most mighty God found out a way to do it in a most wonderfull manner, *viz.* That God should be made man, whereby he that could, and he that

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that ought to satisfie gave satisfaction. God could , and man ought to give it: God and man therefore satisfied, not for himself, but for all mankind.

By which the convenience of his Incarnation much more appears, because herein he hath evidently demonstrated his power, having in such manner united the humane nature with the divine, that God was made man.

And hereby further we may understand, how wonderfull his wisdom is, which hath found out so wonderfull a counsel to recover man that was lost.

Moreover, hereby we may see how great is his bounty, it being wholly infused into the humane nature to embrace it , and whol-

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ly to attract it to his love.

And again, his mercy appears more evidently herein to the world, seeing he would be crucified for the love of mankind; and no less his justice, seeing he would be satisfied wholly even for original sin. And this gives certain hope of his mercy to sinners if they will repent; but if they will not repent, they ought to tremble because of his great justice.

If we consider these and infinite other benefits given by Christ to our nature, we shall find such a depth of wisdom, as no humane understanding can fathom: and that in the things of Christ, and of the Church, which appear foolishness to the wise-men of this world, there are
great

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great mysteries which exceed all the wisdom of man. Thus therefore it appears that Christ hath meetly suffered for the sin of man.

But because he not onely came to satisfie for sin, but to give us an example of life and of justice; it was meet he should choose the most cruel, and the most shamefull death, to give men an example that they should not relinquish the truth and justice, for any reproach or martyrdom, whereby they may be threatened. Although we may assigne many other reasons for this, which for brevity we omit, especially that from this death of the cross, such wonderfull light and delight ariseth in those that love Christ, that no one knows

but they that prove them.

And to the end no one might say he was not truly dead, it was convenient he should remain three days in the grave, wherein if he had continued a long time, and had not rose again from death to life, men might have lost that hope of the Resurrection, which is raised and confirmed in mens hearts, since they understand that he is risen again most gloriously. And because the habitation of this present life, is not convenient to the life of such a glory, 'twas reasonable, that Christ after his resurrection should not converse with men as he did at first. And because his body both in regard of the perfection of his soul, and of the union with the *Word*, is most perfect

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fect & noble above all other bodies, the faith does most meetly confess that Christ ascended and mounted on high above all heavens, and sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty, as his true and onely begotten Son, which we must not understand so grossely, as if he sate upon a bench or seat, but that he reposeth himself in the fruition of eternal happiness, more then any other creature. Also the Son of God, being unjustly judged by men, our faith conveniently saith, that he is made the Judge of the living and the dead, that the reward may answer the punishment which he unjustly suffered for us. If we then do diligently consider that which Christ hath done in the world,

we shall find all things full of mysterie, and shall understand, that the Christian religion is not onely reasonable, but also wonderfull and divine.

CHAP. XI.

That the Christian religion doth most wisely set down two commandments of Charity, for the foundation of the whole Moral life, and that the Moral doctrine of the Church is most excellent.

SEeing we have shewed, that the Christian religion contains nothing impossible or unreasonable, concerning the *Faith*, we will now shew the same concerning *Moral Institution*.

And

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And although that which we said above, when we demonstrated, that there can be no better life found then the Christian is, might be a sufficient proof hereof; nevertheless, that we may more fully declare it, because things are better known in particular then in general, we will instance in some particular laws, that by them we may the better conjecture of the equity of the rest. The *first* principle and foundation therefore of our Moral Doctrine is this, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength*; and the *second* after it, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*: which two commandments we must not so understand, as if it were

were sufficient for the salvation of a Christian, to love God & his neighbour, as is said, by a natural force and love, but by a supernatural grace and love; to the reception whereof, because it is the gift of God, a man ought most diligently to prepare himself. So that the first principle and foundation of the Moral Christian life is this, that by grace and supernatural charity, a man love God above himself, and that he dispose himself and every thing to God, and his honour as his end. The Apostle *Paul* declaring to all Christians, *Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* But because the wantonness of the flesh does draw a man much aside from this love, the command-

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mandment faith, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*; that is, love him in such a manner, that thou submit the sensitive part to the rectitude of the will: for by the heart we may understand the sensitive part, since that is the fountain of the senses, and the principle of the appetite, which often separates us from the divine love. And because the will errs, if it do not conform itself to the right rule of reason, he subjoyns, *with all thy soul*; whereby we may rightly understand the will; for as the soul is the principle of the life & motion of living creatures, by which animate things are discerned from inanimate; the one moving themselves, and the other not: So the will moves all the
facul-

faculties of the reasonable soul. God commands us therefore, that we love him with all our will, that is, that the will with all its actions & motions be ordered to him, namely, that all our love and desire, all our delight and fear and hope be wholly in him, and that we hate and avoid whatsoever is contrary to him and to his honour. And since the motion of the will depends altogether upon reason, because no one can will that he knows not, 'tis well subjoyn'd *with all thy mind*. By which is meant the understanding and reason, because we must so dispose our minde towards God, that whatever we contemplate must be ordered to him either actually or habitually. And because we
must

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must not onely honour God with our spirit but with our body, doing all that we can for his honour in outward things, he saith finally, *and with all thy strength.*

And note that to all these parts he hath conveniently joyn'd this word [*all*] because the end being beloved for it self, the love that is expressed to it is not with measure but as much as may be, but the things which are ordain'd to the end are so far beloved as they are proportioned to it; God therefore being the ultimate end of man, he is reasonably commanded that he love God with *all* his heart, and with *all* his soul, and with *all* his minde, and with *all* his might, that is, that all be ordain'd to God
both

both within & without man, and that he become perfect in life, to the end God may be glorified in him, as the cause is praised in the perfection of its effect. And hereby further it appears in what manner a man ought to love himself, namely that he love himself in order to God, that God may be honoured by him as in his work according to what is abovesaid.

But because it was not so manifest how a man ought to love his neighbour, this love being not so natural to man as that of himself to take away all doubt he adds the second commandment saying *Love thy neighbour as thy self*. The meaning whereof is no other then this, that thou desire the same blessedness
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and perfection of life with all other good things for thy neighbour which thou desirest for thy self, that God may be honoured and praised in him as in his perfect work. Certainly there can be found no precepts more true, and reasonable and divine then these, upon which all laws both divine and humane do depend. And therefore all that which is contain'd in these commandments, and which is consequent from them, is reputed holy & inviolable amongst Christians, and whatever is opposite thereunto impious and diabolical.

From which also it appears how reasonably the scripture proposeth the two Tables of the law to be observed. The one teaching how a man ought to
order

order himself aright towards God, and the other how he ought to order himself towards his neighbour. For man being a politick creature, and so to be considered as part of some society, it belongs to the rectitude of his life first that he be well disposed to the Prince or head of the community or society, and afterwards towards his fellow-citizens. And because every man is a part of the human nature, & every Christian a part of the Christian commonwealth, it belongs to every man to be well dispos'd towards God the supreme Governour of humane nature, and to every Christian to be well dispos'd to the head of the Christian religion, who is Christ, God and man; which he will be, when
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he loves God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his minde, and with all his might.

Whence it appears that the Christian law doth well order the whole man both within and without, leaving nothing untouched, because all other commandments are reduced to these as to their first principles, wherein all is included which the moral life containeth; Philosophers having treated of nothing which teacheth men to live well, which is not virtually in these Commandments, and which the Christian doctrine doth not describe with greater facility and perfection, declaring further many things which they never understood. So that the perfection of the Christian doctrine, is the greatest

greatest in moral things, which omits nothing that is according to reason, nor admits any thing which is contrary to it. Excelling whatever the schools of Philosophers teach, as the height of the heaven is distant from the centre of the earth, or light different from darkness.

CHAP. XII.

That the Christian doctrine is very rational, in what it teacheth concerning judicial laws and constitutions.

VWE will shew in like manner, that the Christian religion is very commendable as to judicial matters. For in all kinds of things, there being

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being one that is principal, which is the measure of the rest; 'tis requisite that in matter of laws there be a principal law likewise, which is the measure of all other laws; and this is no other then the eternal law, which is a certain rule in the divine wisdom, directing all the motions and operations of the creatures.

Whence it is that all other laws are derived from this, because the vertue of the first mover, is found in all inferiour movers & governours. Which rule and measure is in God, as in the person directing & measuring; but in the creatures as in those which are directed and measured by him. And as all creatures are subject to the divine providence, so all have the impression and character of this law,

law, by which every one is naturally inclined to its proper end, and amongst others, the reasonable creature being more excellently subject to the divine providence, partakes more perfectly of this law, which participation in him is called the *natural law*, the root whereof is the light of reason imprinted by God in man, by which certain principles are manifest to us of themselves, as well in practical as in speculative things; and in practical and moral sciences, such principles are called the first commandments, and the first laws of nature, from which all other laws derive in one of these two ways, either as *conclusions* of manifest principles, as is done in speculative sciences commonly: or as *deter-*
mina-

minations made and approved by wisemen; which is like the manner of artificers proceeding, who determine an universal figure to a particular; as the Builder determines his art, which is common to all buildings, to one particular building. By way of *conclusion* this is done thus; The law forbids murder, but to give poyson to a man is to commit murder, therefore poyson ought not to be given to any man. This law, not to give poyson to any one; is drawn from that by way of conclusion, which forbids murder, because of necessity it follows from that. But by way of *determination* it is to be understood thus, as for instance; The law of nature commands that he that sins should be punished, but
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it determines not that he be punished by this or the other punishment, as by beheading, or stripes; the determination thereof is made by the will of prudent men, as they see it to be expedient for publick good. Now such determinations are called *Humane* and *Positive Laws*, and may be varied according to the diversity of times and places. Whence it is, that all men have not the same *Positive Laws*. But natural laws, as well general as particular, are stable with all Nations, which depend upon the principal law by way of conclusion; for false conclusions cannot proceed from true principles.

Forasmuch therefore as the laws of nature were not sufficient

ent for the government of the whole life of man, the help of divine laws was needfull, and although this may be easily understood by that which hath been above-said; nevertheless we shall think it no trouble to prove it yet more clearly.

First, because by the laws man is directed to his proper works, so as to dispose himself to his ultimate end, which being supernatural, the laws of nature are not sufficient to direct him thereunto, because they are not proportioned to such an end.

Again, the weakness of our understanding is such, that by how much we the more descend to particular things, by so much we finde our selves in

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greater difficultie ; and therefore mens judgements oftentimes are very different , concerning the particular works of others , not knowing which is best ; so that it was necessarie the Divine Law should be given , to make men more certain and clear in these particulars.

Again, Humane laws do not punish or forbid every thing, but suffer many less evils , least greater should follow ; and therefore it was necessarie to give men a law , by which they should understand , that if they escaped punishment for some evils by humane laws, they should be punished yet by the divine law.

Again , The laws of men do
not

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not judge the hidden things of the heart, but onely that which appears outwardly ; and therefore the Divine law was necessarie, that they might understand, they should be punished by God even for the sins of the heart, that man might become more perfect both inwardly and outwardly,

We say therefore, that this law is an aggregation of the Divine Commandments, which proceed from the supernatural light of faith: yea, we say, that it is essentially the grace of the holy Ghost, whence all the commandments are derived, whereof we have spoken above, and from these all other particular laws are derived, as from their first principles, either by

340 *The Truth of* Book 3.
way of conclusion, or by way of
determination, as we have said
of Natural laws. But we must
not therefore beleieve that the
Divine Law, and Natural laws
are contrary; but as grace per-
fects nature, so the Divine Law
makes the Natural more per-
fect, and that all that which ap-
pertains to Natural laws, ap-
pertains also to the Divine Law,
but it is said to be a Natural
law, inasmuch as it proceeds
from the light of nature; and a
Divine law inasmuch as it pro-
ceeds from the light of grace.
However we must not beleieve
that every thing that is part of
the Divine Law, is part of the
Natural law likewise; for the
things of faith, and of the Sa-
craments appertain to the Di-
vine

Ch. 12: *the Christian Faith.* 34
vine Law, and not to the law
of Nature.

The Christian Religion then
is governed by these Laws, not
despising any thing which is con-
sonant to truth and a good life;
and not admitting any thing
which is contrary thereunto.
Whence it is that we do not
despise the good and reasona-
ble laws of barbarous nations, as
of the Philosophers and hea-
then Emperours; but we col-
lect that which is good and true
out of all their books and learn-
ing: affirming every truth and
good thing to be of God, and
to be his proper work for his
elect. And so great is the dili-
gence of our Religion to extir-
pate out of its laws and doctrine
all fables and vanitie and lies,

Q 3 that

that it doth not receive them, nor yet doth authorize the books, which have been many times written for the honour and glory of the Saints, when the truth doth not clearly appear, and the name of the Authours; seeking further to correct and amend all errours. And if at any time there be found some particular laws which are not just, this is not to be ascribed to the defect of the Christian doctrine, but to the impiety of some Tyrants. So that it appears, the Christian Religion, governs it self with reason, as well with the Civil, as with the Divine Laws.

CHAP. XIII.

That the Sacraments are conveniently instituted by Christ.

CHRIST by his Passion being the universal cause of our salvation, and the universal cause not working in the things of nature without particular causes, by the means whereof, it applies its vertue to particular effects: It was both convenient and reasonable to finde out some particular cause of our salvation, by means whereof the vertue of Christs passion might be applied to our souls. And these are the Sacraments, by the means whereof, Christ works our salvation. And because 'tis needfull that the particular cause be proportioned to

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the universal, and the instrument to the principal agent, it was convenient and reasonable, that the Sacraments should be instituted by words and visible signes, after the similitude of Christ, who is the *Word* of the eternal Father, to which the humane nature is united. And because no one can be saved without grace, we do conveniently say, that these Sacraments confer grace, as the instruments of Christ.



Preface to the fourth Book.

I Could wish that all men in a sincere and pure heart, were inflamed with the knowledge of the truth, because afterwards it would not be difficult to open their eyes to know it, the understanding being inclined hereunto, as to its proper perfection. Whence sometimes men, though against their will, being drawn by this natural inclination, do speak truth. And because the knowledge of one contrary, conduceth to that of another; as he that knows what is straight, easily knows what is crooked: so he that knows the truth, easily disco-

vers falshood, and solves the false reasons of the Adversaries. And notwithstanding truth always combats with falshood, yet whoever accosteth himself to truth, which is most powerfull, he always overcomes. And therefore when there are different and contrary opinions amongst men, that is to be preferred before others, and to be esteemed true, which is confirmed with more reasons, and with stronger, and which doth more easily solve the contrary objections; especially when it prevails against, and overcomes the most potent adversaries, with whom it hath contended a long time, and by so much the more, by how much it hath confuted their opinions with the strongest arguments. Seeing therefore there is a discord amongst men about Religions,


gions, and that the Christian Religion is confirmed with more reasons, and those more powerfull then other religions are, and that it easily solves all the reasons of the Adversaries, who notwithstanding they have been most potent, & fought against it a long time, have been prostrated, and subdued by it; if we shall demonstrate with their own arms, that not onely all other religions are inferiour to the Christian, but also that they fail in many things, and are full of errors. No one can doubt but that the Christian Religion onely is true, and all others are vain Superstitions. And this we will do first in general, and afterwards we will descend to particulars.

THE

THE FOURTH BOOK.

CHAP. I.

*That no other Religion is true but
the Christian onely.*

E may understand by what hath been above-said, that the Christian Religion onely is true. For this being the end of religion, that we may learn to *live well*, and there being no better *life* then the Christian *life* there can be no religion which is better, or superiour to the Christian religion, for if besides this there could be found any other religion, it must needs be either inferiour or equal to it; if it be inferiour we ought to apply our selves to the Christian

as

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as to the better, which styles all others but vain superstitions. If it be equal to it, it can be no other then the Christian religion it self, because it must have the same end, and the same life with it, and so it cannot be called equal to it but the same. But if it propose any other end or means to attain it, it cannot be equal but inferiour, because no better end, or more perfect means to attain that end can be imagined then what the Christian religion teacheth. If the cause is known by its effects the Christian religion, which makes the life the most perfect and the most holy, must needs be the true religion, especially since it produceth this effect (which no other religion doth) with great facility and in
a short

a short time. He therefore that followeth the Christian religion doth not erre, but who ever followes any other, since the Christian religion condemneth all others falleth into grievous errors. And that this may be the better seen in particulars we will dispute against several sorts of religion namely against Philosophers, Astrologers, Idolaters, Jews, and Mahumetans, for to pursue every vain superstition would be a vain and superfluous labour. And although Philosophers, Astrologers, and Idolaters have different opinions amongst themselves, and that all these sects are divided into parts, nevertheless because these different sects have some agreement the one with the other, we
will

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will dispute against all Philosophers together, and so likewise against Astrologers and Idolaters. As to the Jewes, and Mahumitans because they are united every one in their sect, there is no doubt but we may dispute against all of either of these two sects together. And that we may proceed in this book by natural reason, which Philosophers have always followed, we will begin to dispute against them with their own weapons.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That the religion of Philosophers is full of defects and errors.

First then, being willing to dispute against Philosophers we will prove that although they had not erred in what they have written; nevertheless they have treated very little and insufficiently of the things which belong to salvation, being not able to go beyond the bounds of natural light. For the end being the rule of all our operations, since it was their desire to bring men to live well, they ought to have made them know what is the end of mans life, which they not knowing themselves, because it exceeds the bounds of natural reason,

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reason, how could they ordain any thing certain as to that which concerns a good life and true religion? for the last end being unknown to them they could not know the means to attain it.

And therefore whatever Philosophers have ordained concerning the divine worship is either imperfect, or uncertain, or erroneous. What wiseman then will abandon the Christian religion to embrace that of the Philosophers? And notwithstanding the most excellent amongst them have defin'd the end of mans life to be the contemplation of divine things; nevertheless this their saying is very confused; they being not able to give any certainty of this their end; because if they were demanded.

manded whether they understood it of this present life, or of that which is to come, they could answer nothing which is certain: for considering the dangers and incommodities of the present life, it is unreasonable, yea, impossible to place blessedness in the life that now is, as we have proved above; and they being not able by natural reason to search out any thing of the life which is to come, whatever they should say would be without proof, and uncertain, and so not to be received by any.

They are entangled further in greater difficulties, in the question concerning the immortality of the soul; the difficultie arising especially from this, That the soul having the operation of
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the understanding without a corporeal organ, it might seem, that in this part it could not be the form of the body; because that which works without a body, seems also to be without a body. And therefore *Plato* said, That the soul was not the form, but the mover of the body: against which *Aristotle* wrote, who notwithstanding spoke so obscurely of the understanding separated, that his Commentator *Averroes*, fell into a very unreasonable and erroneous opinion, saying, that all men had onely one understanding. I beleieve, *Aristotle* being a man of a most sagacious wit, seeing that the natural light could not reach to the perfect knowledge of this matter, spoke very cautiously of it, as desiring
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not to be reprov'd, and therefore Philosophers were put to a great strait herein, because if they made our soul to be the form of the body, reason seem'd to require that it should be mortal, and if they should say it was not the form of the body, it could not be understood how a man should be a man by the intellectualive soul. And if they had said, according as our Faith defineth, that although, the intellectualive faculty be separate from the organ, hereby it did not follow that the substance of the soul should not be the form of the body, they having no other light then that of nature they would have run into other difficulties no less then the former, because it would then have been demanded
of

of them, whence came this form, and unto this they would not have been able to have answered any thing that is certain, because it being elevated above all corporeal things they could not say that it was produc'd by any natural power; nor would they have said that it was created of nothing, because they did not grant a Creation; and if they should have said it, being not able to prove it by reason, they would have been derided. Some therefore beleiving they might avoid this question, said, That all souls were from eternity before the bodies. But they fell into greater Labyrinths, because they could not defend that the soul was the form of the body, and drew themselves likewise into

into other inconveniences which the Peripateticks alledge against the Platonists. And although *Aristotle* said that the intellectuall soul came from without; namely not from any natural power, nevertheless this his saying is very confus'd, not telling us whence or in what manner it came into this world; and if he will have the intellectuall soul to be immortal and the form of the body, according to what he teacheth, it cannot be before the body, nor go from body to body. And since as he saith it doth not proceed from any natural power, I cannot see how *Aristotle* can deny the Creation.

Again, if without the light of faith they say that the soul is immortal, and the form of the body,

dy, they will fall into some other Questions which are very difficult. For we shall demand of them whether the soul was from eternity, & whether it shall endure to eternity? And if they say that the world had a beginning, and shall have an end, seeing this cannot be proved by natural reason; such an opinion would be derided, and little esteemed. But if they say (as it was the opinion of *Aristotle*) that the world had no beginning, nor shall have any end, they must needs grant that infinite days and years are already past; and since man is the principal part of the world, they cannot reasonably deny that the world ever was without man, and so the number of the men that are dead will be infinite.

infinite. And if they say, that the soul is the form of the body, and immortal, and that it does not go from body to body, they must needs say that there are infinite souls, which is a thing unreasonable. And if they say, that this is not unreasonable, they will yet run into greater difficulties; for the soul being the form of the body, 'tis against its nature that it stands out of the body, whence we see that 'tis separated from the body very unwillingly and violently. Seeing therefore that nothing that is violent can be everlasting, especially the things which are most noble; if they say the souls do not return once again to their own bodies, they must needs grant, that infinite noble souls shall

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shall violently, and against their own nature, continue for ever out of their own bodies. And if they shall grant the Resurrection, they will be constrained to say, that infinite bodies shall rise again, which is impossible except they should say, that after a certain long time the souls shall return again to the same bodies, and that the same things shall return likewise, and that infinite times it hath been so; namely, that the same things have been, and returned; but they saying this without reason, we may with the same facility condemn it that they alledge it. And certain it is, that this cannot be proved by reason, being a thing so irrational and absurd; because we must needs say then, that we our
R selves,

selves, together with all other things, have been infinite times before this present time.

Into these and other the like inextricable difficulties do they run, who will search out the end of mans life by natural reason; and therefore they cannot define any thing that is stable, or certain concerning the divine worship. and the manner of living well, since they fail so much in the principal part. It is no wonder then if the Religions instituted by Philosophers have been so imperfect, uncertain, and so full of errors, which we might better yet understand, if we should run through their opinions and divers errors; for we should then see how weak and mean the natural light of man is. The uttermost

most vertue of every thing is known, when it doth all whatsoever it can do. Now the light of nature having shewed all its force in the most excellent Philosophers, as appears by this signe, because others that have succeeded them have found little that is new, or of any moment which they have not said; seeing then that these excellent Philosophers have erred in many things, and especially in the things of salvation, it appears how great the weakness of natural light is. Assuredly, the first Philosophers who placed the end of man in riches, in glory, in pleasures, or in any other corporeal thing, were more deceived then they which placed it in the contemplation of divine things;

and yet these for all this, did not define any thing that was certain, but left men in great confusion, in what concerns their salvation.

Furthermore, there are as many opinions and errors concerning the intellectual soul, as there are Philosophers; and though we should suffer the diversity of opinions and fallacies to stand, which *Aristotle* mentions in the first book of the soul; yet those who follow *Aristotle* are divided: some saying that the understanding of man is one thing, and some another, in such manner, that even to this present the difference of Philosophers is so great, that their scholars are confounded, and would still continue in greater confusion and
dark.

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darkness, if the faith of Christ
had not enlightened the world.

And besides this, he who should
reade their books, would finde as
many errours as words, as to the
manner wherein; and the end for
which the world was created, and
whether it have a beginning or
end. And notwithstanding some
of them have endeavoured to
prove the eternity of the world;
nevertheless the reasons of *Ari-*
stotle to this purpose are so weak,
that it is easie for every learned
man to solve them. But what
shall we say of the number of
Angels, or (as they speak) of
separated substances, of whom
Aristotle, following the motion
of the heavens, said, That they
were as many as the heavenly
spheers, as if they had been made

onely to move the heaven, and for no other thing, which is ridiculous ; although we beleeve he spoke according to probability, not affirming, but opining, and speaking as he was able.

And as to the outward worship of God, omitting many of their grievous errours, they have defined nothing that is certain, as is above-said. Whence it is that they have had various opinions of the divine providence, and have said and writ many frivolous things. So that it appears that the doctrine of Philosophers hath conduced very little to the salvation of man, and to the divine worship, but that their divers opinions have been the cause of confusion. Nevertheless, the things which they have
spoken

spoken well, are to be taken from them as from unjust possessours, and to be translated to our use; for though they be not sufficient to salvation, yet they may help in something, especially to confute the Adversaries of the faith.

CHAP. III.

*That the traditions of Astrologers
are altogether unprofitable and
superstitious.*

BUt because Astrologers, who would be reckoned amongst Philosophers, think that humane affairs are governed by the heaven, and by the stars, making the heaven as it were our God (whence some of the ancients worshipped the sun, and the

R 4 planets,

planets, and the other stars :) we will now prove by strong reasons, that this is the greatest error, and that the celestial bodies are not the cause of the things which man does by means of his understanding and will: And that *first*, because according to the order of nature, superiour things are not governed by inferior. Our understanding therefore being more high and perfect than all bodies, cannot be governed in its operations, by the celestial, or any other bodies.

Again, It is proved by Philosophers, that no body works without motion, and therefore all unmoveable things; such as are all incorporeal things, amongst which is the intellectual soul, are not subject to bodies. Whence
we

we see that the understanding is more expedite in its operations and becomes more prudent and learned by how much it is more abstracted from motion and the disquiet of corporeal things.

Again, all things which are moved and governed by the heavenly, or by other bodies, are corporeal and subject to time; but such is not our understanding, especially since we see that its operations transcend all bodies, and extend themselves unto immaterial things, even to God himself; which no corporeal vertue can do; because nothing can work above its nature. And therefore the vertue of the celestial bodies cannot work properly upon our understanding, the vertue of our understanding

being more ample then that of the heaven. Many therefore being constrained by these reasons do say that it is true the heavenly bodies are not directly the cause of our understanding, but indirectly onely, because our intellect using the sensitive vertues, especially the imaginative, the cogitative, and the memorative, that do follow the disposition of the body, which is subject to the celestial bodies, as other mixt bodies are; the heaven in a manner bears rule over our understanding; whence we see that from the diversity of complexions there results a diversity of wits. But he who diligently considers the nature of the understanding, & of free-will, shall see that neither in this sense can
we

we say that the heaven is the cause of the choice that we make of things, or that it governs humane affaires; because all things w^{ch} proceed from the impression of the celestial bodies naturally, proceed from them as they are naturally subject to them; if then the operations of free-will should proceed from the impression of the celestial bodies they would be natural and not voluntary, and so a man would do what he doth by natural instinct, and not by free-will: and how absurd this is, is easily shewed. *First*, because we see that all things which work by natural instinct are of the same nature, and tend to the same end, by the same means, and in the same manner; as all heavy things go to the centre.

center. But men we see go to divers ends ; and by divers ways, as well in moral as in artificial things ; their operations therefore are not natural but voluntary, *Secondly*, because all things which proceed from nature are always, (or as it were always) well ordered, nature erring in very few things ; but the operations of men daily are full of errors. *Thirdly*, the operations which follow nature are not various in such things as have the same nature, whence we see that all swallows make their nest and feed their young ones after the same manner, and so do sparrows, and other creatures in their kinde, but humane operations are so unlike, that hardly is there found a man that doth as another

ther doth; because they do not follow nature, but the faculty of free-will. *Fourthly*, if the elections of men were natural, virtue and vice would be imputed to nature and not to man, all justice, all counsell and all humane providence would perish, & because nature is governed by God, & cannot be changed, every man must needs be left to go after his own instinct, which if it should go so, I leave every one to think how all humane things would go.

Again, that we may return to our principal purpose. As the understanding in its operations exceeds all bodies, so doth the will in like manner, because its love, and desire, and delight extends it self even unto God, and therefore this can be subject to

no corporeal vertue.

Again, it is requisite that the means be proportioned to the end, the ultimate end of man therefore being above every corporeal thing, the operations of the understanding, and of the will by which a man acquires this end, must needs be above every body, and so not subject to the celestial bodies. And although our bodies be subject to these, which by their operations incline men many times to do that which they should not do, nevertheless it is so easie for the free-will to resist such inclinations, that no one can say its operations are subject to the heavens, but to its own liberty. So that it cannot be affirmed that the heaven is our God, being not properly the
cause

cause of our operations, because God is the first cause, who makes all things and causeth all operations in every thing.

But because some holding that the celestial bodies are animated, say, that it is true indeed that they by themselves do not move our understanding and free-will, but that this effect is caused inasmuch as they are moved by the soul of the heaven. However we shall easily prove how far this is from all reason. First because in vain doth any frame an instrument which hath no vertue upon the thing which he would do, we having therefore proved that the vertue of the heaven doth not extend it self to move our understanding and free-will, it would be

be a vain thing to say that the heaven works upon our understanding, inasmuch as it is an instrument moved by the soul of the heaven. Secondly, because such a soul by means of the heavenly body as its instrument, cannot directly and immediately move the understanding and the will, because corporeal actions in this manner do not reach the spirit; true it is by vertue of the celestial bodies, it may alter our bodies and by them change the fancy and the inward senses, by which the good we ought to follow, or the evil we ought to avoid, is represented to our understanding; but hereby a man is never constrained either to follow or avoid that which is represented to him, but remains always

ways free to will or not to will, to think or not to think such things; as daily experience sheweth, and every man confesseth; namely that a man is master of his own works. And therefore no one can say that the heaven and the stars, or the soul of the heaven is God; because (as we have said) God is that who immediately and properly gives being and operation to all things, and who moves our understanding and free-will, although he always moves it freely, for he moves every thing according to its condition.

All the worship therefore which hath been instituted in honour of the heaven and of the stars, or of the soul of the heaven, is vain and pernicious; because

cause such bodies are ordained to the service of man, and no one ought to honour that which is ordain'd to his service; whence the vanity of Astrologers is manifest, who do attribute to the heaven the government of humane affairs, and would govern men by the observation of the stars. And some modern writers; Christians rather in name than in deed, do seek to cover the vanity of Judiciary Astrology with certain sopperies; saying, that it is true that our understanding, and free-will by their own nature, are not subject to the heaven but to God alone: Nevertheless because the sensitive part, which all men as it were follow, is subject to the heaven, they may see many things

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things which are to come in the government of humane things, especially because they say God governs these inferiour things by the heavens as by second causes. And so far are they transported in this blinde judgement, being blinded by the devell the father of lies; and the inventour of every superstition, that derogating from the divine Majesty, they make men to believe the heaven rather than God, and perswade them they can do nothing, unless they first take counsel with the stars.

But that this divining Astrology is altogether vain, and unworthy of the name of an Art or Science, is especially manifest in this, because the most excellent Philosophers have not vouchsafed

fed (I do not say to study it, but even) to confute it, judging it rather fitting to be past by with contempt and silence. Whence it is, that having with subtiltie treated of all the parts of Philosophy, neither *Plato* nor *Aristotle* ever made mention hereof, which certainly they would not have omitted, if it had appertained to Philosophy, having with so great sagacity, and desire searched out all the secrets of nature. But on the contrary, *Aristotle* in many places proveth, that there can be neither science, nor art of such things, which divining Astrology treateth of; because future things which may indifferently be or not be, cannot be known in themselves, in regard that they are not, nor yet in their causes, because

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cause they being indifferent to produce them, or not to produce them, it cannot be known, but onely by God, to what part they will incline. And if we should admit, they might in some manner be known by men, however it would be foolish to beleieve they might be known by regarding onely the heaven, which is an universal cause of inferiour things; in regard that no one can know particular effects, by regarding onely the universal cause. Whence it is that Philosophers who desire to know the properties of particular effects, do not onely search out the universal causes; but much more the nearest and particular causes: and Physicians do not seek out the causes of diseases onely in the
heaven,

heaven, or endeavour to cure with the Astrolabe in their hand; but rather endeavour to finde out the paticular causes, and the disposition of the body. And therefore to endeavour to know things to come, which proceed from free-will, or from particular causes indeterminately (which may be varied infinite manner of ways) in regarding onely the heaven and the stars, is a vain thing, fit onely for light men abounding in ignorance.

And because this is the foundation of Astrologers, that in divers parts of the heaven there are divers vertues and properties, we may yet by this further understand their vanity, because they have no certainty hereof, speaking to the wind; and beleeving

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ving some superstitious persons, who have thus writ without any reason. Assuredly we know that the most excellent Philosophers have had more understanding and learning then they, and yet they have not found that vertue in the heaven which these place there. But say, that whatever the heaven does upon the earth, it does it by means of its light and motion, concluding that all the variety which proceeds from the sphears and stars, is caused hence in the first place, and secondly, from the variety of the disposition of the matter, and of particular agents: and therefore to know particular things which are to be hereafter, it is not sufficient to know the variety of the light, and of the motion of the
heaven,

heaven, but also it is needfull to know the disposition of the matter, and the nature of particular agents, without which the heaven works not: which admit we know, we could not yet for all this come to the certain knowledge of that which is to come; especially of such things as proceed from free-will, for the reasons above-said, how much less then by regarding the heaven onely.

But let us grant however to Astrologers, that there are divers properties in the heavens, it does not yet follow hereby, that their Astrologie is not vain; because these properties cannot be other then universal causes of such things as are done upon the earth: for being more removed
from

from them, then the elements are, and the elements being universal causes of such things, the stars and the planets are much more to be esteemed universal causes. As therefore by knowing onely the fire, or the generative vertue of such things as have life, we cannot come to the knowledge of the generation of a man, or an olive; much less can we come to such a knowledge by regarding onely the heavens.

And however we grant further to Astrologers, that the vertues of the stars are more particular then those of the elements; (though it be absurd to affirm this) nevertheless divining Astrologie will be unprofitable and vain: for admitting it were thus, it would be impossible for men

to search out such vertues, the heaven being so far removed from our senses, whence all our knowledge begins. If the most excellent Philosophers could never finde them out, and experience shews us that we cannot dive into the properties of such things as we handle daily, how much less then can Astrologers search out the properties of the stars, they being not to compare either in wit, or learning, to those great Philosophers, which could not find out such things.

But admit further that they knew such vertues, there were no cause for them yet to glory in this their vain superstition, because the particular things which are under heaven cannot be made in vain. If therefore there be
such

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such particular vertues in the heaven, as for example, one vertue determined to generate a man, another a bull, and the like; we must needs say that the particular vertues which are under heaven, are ordain'd onely to dispose the matter, and the celestial vertues to introduce the form: which if it were so, it would not be sufficient for the Astrologer, when he will divine, to contemplate onely the heaven, because divers forms are introduced according to the divers dispositions of the matter; and if the matter be not disposed, the form naturally cannot be introduced into it. Seeing therefore that the disposition of the matter, may divers ways be hindred, without doubt the Astrologer cannot have cer-

tain knowledge of particular things, in regarding onely the heaven. As for instance, If the vertue of a star were determined to produce grapes of a vine, by regarding the stars onely the effect cannot be known, which will follow in such a vine; because many things may hinder that effect, as the evil disposition of the earth, the cutting of it by men at unseasonable times, the destroying of it by cattel, the concurrence of some other star, whereby there may fall out too much wet or drought, or other impediments may happen. And if this be true in natural things, the judgement will be much more fallacious and uncertain about that which proceeds from free-will, which is so variable.

So

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So that it appears, the government of men does not depend upon the heavens, and that it is ridiculous to endeavour to order mans life by the observation of the stars, especially seeing the volubility of free-will is so great, and that men do easily every day change their fancie; and considering also that this art is built upon false grounds. But because it is not our intention at this time to dispute against this vanitie, it sufficeth that we have proved, that every worship which is invented, or can be invented to honour the heaven, is vain and superstitious. The Lord *John Pico* Earl of *Mirandola*, who because of the height of his wit, and sublimitie of his learning, is to be reckoned amongst the great things of God

and nature, in the book of his disputations, hath with so great elegancie, subtilty, and efficacy annihilated this divining Astrology, that whoever shall read and understand that Treatise, and not deride it, deserves himself to be derided of every one. And I also, that every one may understand its vanity, have composed, and published against it, a book in the vulgar tongue. Whoever will therefore, may read these books, and he shall see how foolish a thing it is, to busie himself herein, and to give any credit to such a vanity.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That the sect of IDOLATERS is most vain above all others.

WE have demonstrated that the religion of Philosophers, who worshipped the first cause, to be insufficient for the obtaining of salvation; and that that of Astrologers is most vain and pernicious. How much more then is that worship to be derided, which was heretofore given to idols, and statues of stone and wood, in the shape of men, or beasts? We need not certainly to dispute against this worship; because everie one knows, how foolish it is to honour insensible things. But because some willing to excuse this

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folly, say, that they do not give honour to these images, but to the gods dwelling in them, or represented by them; we will shew that the worship which they gave to these their gods was, and yet is, if now there be any such, most impious and superstitious; whereof we shall conveniently treat in this place: for having spoken of the extremes, it is fit now to speak of the mean separated substances, which were called the gods of the Pagans, standing as it were in the midst between God, and the heaven. But first we must know, that God moves the will of man two ways. One, when he shews him any good to excite him to the love of it. The other when he applies his vertue to the will causing

ing it to come forth to the act of love or desire: as the shepherd moves the sheep either by shewing them a green bough to draw them thereunto, or taking and leading them with his hand whether he pleaseth. Now notwithstanding other creatures may move the will of man the first way, yet none can move it this second way; because as the will immediately proceeds from God, so it is immediately subject to him, and he alone can move it to will or not to will, and although the will be wholly in the power of God, yet he doth not move it otherwise then willingly, leaving it always to will freely, because God moves every thing according to its form and natural inclination, and

therefore man, as man is immediately subject to God, and must onely worship him, as the first mover, and governour of every thing.

But because some possibly may say, that although they worshipped divers gods, yet they referred all their worship to the great God, whom they worshipped in the other gods; we will shew, that by this the vanity and perniciousness of their worship cannot be defended. *First*, because the common sort was deceived herein who understood not this distinction. *Secondly*, because in their ceremonies, they did many vain and ridiculous things, and such as were contrary to good manners. And we cannot say that such things were
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done by bad men onely, who sought to deprave the worship of their idols, because those rites and ceremonies were observed all the world over, even by great men.

But letting these disputations stand, we will shew that those whom they called gods were not gods, but evil spirits, in whom God could not be honoured. *First*, because it belongs to every understanding that is well ordered, not onely to submit himself to his cause, and to honour that which is God, but to dispose inferiour understandings likewise to the same thing, to the end that God who is the worker of every thing, may be glorified in every thing; but the spirits that Idolaters worshipped, never

never ordered the understandings of men to the true worship, and to live orderly, but we read that they did all things to the contrary, perverting all order, deceiving men, and usurping the honour of God, so that by them the whole world was full of darkness and sin, and men had no knowledge of God.

Again, good spirits never do evil works, they do not favour hatred, nor teach any evil; but we read of these gods, that there were discords and wars amongst them, sacrileges, incests, and many other detestable things, which no good man can hear mentioned without offence: Whence it is that the whole world hath learned an evil example of life from the fables composed of them. A-

Again, God being altogether perfect, and having need of nothing, he doth not desire that we honour him for any good of his; but he wills and commands that we honour him for our own profit, to the end that we may become perfect and blessed. Forasmuch therefore as every understanding, which under God is well ordered, ought to endeavour to conform it self to God as much as may be; and likewise to endeavour that men give due worship to God, to attain perfection of life: those gods of the heathen, if they had been good spirits, would have laboured to have made men good and perfect in the spiritual life, to which especially it belongs to know God, to love him and to seek

seek him with all the heart which they never did, but as much as they could envelop'd men in many deceits and vanities; in such manner, that much more of that which concerns divine things, vertue, and a blessed life, is to be learned in the schools of Philosophers, namely of *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, and *Aristotle*; then in the Temples of the gods; and the Philosophers, which despised such worship or very little regarded it, were better then their gods, and priests, which were so intent upon it.

Again, if they had been good spirits they would have ascertain'd men of that, which they so much desire, namely, concerning blessedness and true vertue, especially since they made shew

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to have so great a care of mans life; whereunto it belongs to direct things unto their due end; considering that Philosophers, by reason of the weakness of humane understanding; could not attain to such knowledge: but this these gods did not onely not do, but rather confounded the minds of men; so that the knowledge of men herein, was very little and much confused.

Again, good spirits are not liars, nor do they deceive men, because lying and deceit is always naught, but we read of these gods that they told many lies, and many times deceived men, in their doubtfull and fallacious answers.

Moreover we having shewed above that to foretell future things

things, is a divine property, if they had been good spirits, they would not have usurped this office; for they did not say as the Prophets, *this* or that *saith the Lord God*, but they spake as of themselves, arrogating the foreknowledge of things to come, and involving men in many superstitions, pretending to reveale what should be hereafter, by looking into the bowels of creatures, or by the flying and singing of birds, and such like fopperies; which good spirits would not have suffered, but altogether forbidden.

Again, if they had been good spirits, they would not have favoured Magical arts, wherein many adulterous persons often exercised themselves; and innocents
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were put to death, and favour
was shewed to wicked persons,
and many other brutish things
were done, which good men by
most severe laws abominate and
forbid.

Furthermore, no good spirit is
delighted in cruelty; but we read
that in the sacrifices of these
gods, not onely beasts, but men
were killed, especially innocent
boys and maids that were vir-
gins, whereof innumerable were
put to death by their own pa-
rents; their gods requiring it, who
delighted themselves in such cru-
elty. Whence it is, that after
the preaching of the Apostles,
when the Temples of the idols
were destroyed, innumerable
bones both of men and women,
and especially of boys and maids
that

that were dead, were found there.

We might here speak of infinite evils which proceeded from the worship of idols. But since that by the benefit of our Saviour Christ Jesus, this evil is totally extinguished in the world, where his doctrine is received, that which we have said shall suffice for the present: especially since the most knowing & learned men amongst our Ancestours, have writ copiously hereof. Certainly, if these had been gods, man could not have wholly extinguished the worship and honour which was given to them.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Confutation of the perfidie and superstition of the Jews.

IT appears by what hath been said above, that before the coming of Christ, the light of natural reason was so much decayed, that if he had not succoured the world, men would have run into so great darkness and errors, that they would have become worse then unreasonable creatures, and therefore man hath need of supernatural light. But because many have depraved the knowledge which proceeds from this light, (amongst which the Jews are the principal); we will first dispute against them, shewing that they are in an error; notwithstanding that they boast of the Old Testament, which
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they pervert with their extorted and false expositions. And because all their hope depends upon the Messias, whom they yet expect; if we shall shew that the Messias is already come, and that he was and is *Jesus of Nazareth* our Saviour; they cannot denie but that our Religion is of God, and that they are in a great error. And however the reasons set down in the second Book might suffice, because if Jesus be not the Messias, what other can come, who is greater and better then he? nevertheless we will here alledge speciall reasons grounded upon the Scriptures which they beleieve, which we will briefly dispatch, because this matter hath been at other times discussed by most learned men. And

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And notwithstanding we have promised to proceed in this Book by reason, & not by authority, yet the reasons grounded upon the authority which the Adversaries do undoubtedly beleieve are most efficacious against them: whence likewise some profit may arise to other unbelievers, when they shall understand the things which concern Christ, to be foretold by the Prophets so long before. We will therefore prove that Christ Jesus of Nazareth crucified by the Jews, is the true Messias foretold by the Patriarchs and Prophets, & figured divers ways in the Scriptures, premising such principles as are manifest of themselves.

First, It is known amongst all the Jews, that God promised to give them a Saviour, and great Pro-

Prophet, whom they call the Messias, and to whom he commands them all to be obedient, and to attend as to himself. Whence Moses in *Deuteronomy*, chap. 18. thus speaks unto the people; *The Lord shall raise unto you a Prophet of your own nation, and brethren, like unto me, to him shall you hearken.* And again the Lord speaks by Moses in this manner; *I will raise unto you a Prophet from among your brethren, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him, and whosoever shall not hearken unto his words which he shall speak in my name, I will execute vengeance upon him.*

Most certain it is further, and approved of by all the Jews, that

that the conditions of the Messias were foretold in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms; namely, of what *stock*, in what *place* and time he should be born, what his *life* should be, and the *doctrine* which he should teach, and the *works* which he should do, and many other things which appertain onely to the Messias.

Moreover, it is known to all the world by the books of Christians, that all the Old Testament is so expounded by our Doctours, that all the conditions which appertain to the Messias, do agree to Jesus of Nazareth; Insomuch that if the Jews had not testified all the world over, concerning the antiquity of Moses and the Prophets, many possibly might doubt

doubt whether Christians had not counterfeited such prophecies fainedly, to prove the things concerning Christ.

We demand therefore of the Jews, If Jesus of Nazareth be the true Messias or no. If he be the Messias, certainly they ought to make themselves Christians, it being commanded them that they ought to hear and follow him. If he be not the Messias, how hath God suffered, that all the conditions of the Messias should meet together in him? having especially commanded them, that they should follow him who had these conditions. Certainly, if Jesus of Nazareth be not the Messias, they must needs say one of these three things: Either that God when
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he pronounced the conditions of the Messias, knew not that Jesus of Nazareth was to come; or if he knew it, that he could not hinder his coming; or if that he could hinder it, that he would not: none of which any man will say that is not out of his senses. If God then did know that Jesus was to come, and could have hindered his coming, why did he not do it? especially since he had given such commandments to the Jews. Certainly it would follow, that God should have deceived the Jews, and that the Christians ought not to be condemned for following Jesus of Nazareth, in whom all the Prophets agree, and who hath been wonderfull above all men. And assuredly if he be not the Messi-

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as, we need to look for no other who can do greater things then he; and so all men would be deceived by God, which were most foolish to affirm. Let the Jews turn over the Scriptures, and see what greater thing they can attribute to the Messias whom they expect, which does not agree much more to Jesus of Nazareth.

Again, the *time* wherein the Messias was to come, is pronounced in the Scriptures, which, as the same do shew, is already past, and seeing there was never any in the world of greater power, wisdom, and goodness, then Jesus of Nazareth, who was descended of the Jews; who can think, if the Messias be come, that he should be any other then he.

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he. Now that the time of his coming is past, it appears in many places of the Scripture. And first in *Genesis* we have that known testimony of Jacob, which saith, *The kingdome shall not be taken from Judah, nor a Prince from his sons, till he who shall be commanded come, and he shall be the hope & expectation of the Gentiles.* Where the Chaldee translation, which is of greatest authority with the Jews, saith, *till the Messias come.* Now it is manifest, that the kingdome of Judah, yea, of all the generation of the Hebrews, is wholly annihilated. Also in *Daniel*, chap. 9. we reade thus: *Seventy weeks are allotted for thy people, and for thy holy City, to finish transgression, and make an end of sin, and to bring*

in everlasting righteousness, and to fulfill vision and prophesie, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the beginning of the promise to build again Ierusalem, there shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks, and the street shall be built again, and the walls in a stress of times. And after threescore and two weeks, the Messiah shall die, and they shall not be his people who shall denie him; and a people with the Captain who is to come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary. and the end shall be destruction, and after the end of the war, desolation. But he shall confirm the covenant with many one week, and in the middle of the week the oblation & sacrifice shall cease, and there shall be the abomination of desolation in
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the temple, and that desolation shall endure to the end and consummation. From which words we may easily understand, that our Jesus is the true Messias, because it is a long time since these weeks are past, and there hath no other as yet appeared but he, to whom they can be applied: For in the holy Scripture there is no other thing understood by weeks, then seven days, or seven years, as we may reade in the 23, and 25 chapters of *Leviticus*: now seventy weeks of years, are four hundred and ninety years, which from Daniels time to this present, have past about four times.

And if any should say, That Danel by a week does not understand seven days, or seven years, but some other greater time; we

shall demand of him, what time that is, and he being not able to answer authentically any other thing then what we have said, it is manifest that what time he shall assigne without authoritie of Scripture, must be made and invented by him. Certainly, if by weeks God had been pleased we should understand any other number of days and years; then that which is written in the Scripture, having not declared it to Daniel, or some other, this prophesie would have been in vain: nay, being not to be understood, it would have been the cause of error and confusion. We must therefore needs say, that the time of the Messias is past, and that he is already come.

Nor can it be said, that although

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though these weeks are past, nevertheless the Messias is not yet come, seeing that Daniel, and the other Prophets do not determine how long a time it was before he was to come, after the fore-named times; because it would follow, that the Prophets then had not spoken any certain thing of Christ; and also because Daniel speaks plainly thus; *Know then and understand, that from the beginning of the promise to rebuild Jerusalem, to Christ the Prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty and two weeks: and he subjoyns, That he shall confirm the covenant with many one week, and in the midst of the week, the sacrifice and the oblation shall cease.* The exposition of which words certainly can be applied to none

but to our Christ. Whereby it appears, that this Scripture is made for him, and that otherwise God would have been the cause of our error, in suffering that to be fulfilled in another, which he hath pronounced of the Messias. But let us set upon the exposition. From what is above-said it is manifest, that Jesus came into the world to cast out errors, and to bring men to live well and happily. And therefore determining the time of his coming, he saith well, *Seventy weeks are determined, and cut out for thy people, and the holy Citie;* and this he saith, because he first fore-told it to the Jews: *to finish transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness:* which things we see

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see already fulfilled in all the world. And because all the Prophets speak, as it were, of no other then of Jesus of Nazareth, it follows well, *to fulfill vision and prophesie, and to anoint the most holy*, that is, that Jesus of Nazareth may be anointed by the holy Ghost in his conception; then whom (as is above shewed) there was never any that was more good and holy. But because many and divers things were done in all this time, he describes them distinctly: *First*, making mention of the seven weeks, because in this time the Temple with great difficulty was rebuilt, and the Citie which *Nabuchadonosor* had destroyed, as we may reade in *Esdra*s and *Nehemiah*. *Secondly*, he describes

the threescore and two weeks, because in those years the Jews were most grievously afflicted, as we reade in the History of the *Maccabees*. *Thirdly*, he recounts one week, because in the beginning thereof, Iesus began to preach, and in the midst thereof he was crucified: for he preached three years and an half, and afterwards his Apostles preached, shewing to the Iews that the sacrifices and ceremonies of the law ought no more to be observed; because the truth being come, the figure ought to cease. Now that Christ began to preach, and that he was afterwards put to death in the foresaid time, our Doctours do clearly shew from Histories, which for brevity we will omit, because
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such books are every where divulged. And because the Iews denied Christ before Pilate, saying, *We have no other King but Cesar*, they were justly reprobated by God; and the Gentiles assumed in their stead; & therefore he saith, *And they shall not be his people who shall deny him.* And because for this sin they were scattered and destroyed, he subjoyns, *The people with the captain who is to come*, that is, the Roman people with their Captain which was to come, which was *Vespasian* and *Titus*, shall dissipate or overthrow their city and sanctuary, that is, the Temple. And because the Iews were wholly destroyed and dispersed, and their city ruined, it follows, *the end shall be destruction, and after the war a sure.*

sure desolation. But observe that God had promised to the Patriarchs and Prophets, to send the Messias, which should instruct them concerning the kingdome of heaven, and preach to them a new Law. And therefore it is written in *Jeremy*, chap. 31. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Iudah: not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, which covenant they kept not, though I bore rule over them. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, that after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts,*
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and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And therefore Daniel saith well, That he shall confirm the covenant with many one week; that is, That Christ by his blood, and by his preaching, and by that of his Apostles, shall confirm the covenant of the New Testament, not with all, because all did not beleve, but with many one week, that is, the last week, in the midst whereof the oblation and the sacrifice shall cease, because in the midst of this week Christ Iesus was crucified, who was figured by those oblations and sacrifices of the old law: By all right therefore, they being but the shadow, ought to cease when the light came. The Temple then with all its sacrifices being made use-
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less, God would have it to be profaned, and totally destroyed. And therefore it follows in Daniel, *And there shall be the abomination of desolation in the temple;* because in that place where the Ark of Moses was, the statue of *Adrian* the Emperour was afterwards placed, which is called *abomination*, in regard that with the Jews every idol was abominable. Which further may be referred to their sacrifices, which were then made abominable unto God. Finally, because the Jews shall not be converted to the faith, but in the end of the world; Daniel concludes and sayes, *And the desolation shall endure to the end and consummation:* which *Hoseah* the Prophet in his third chapter confirms in these words,
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Thou shalt wait for me many days, thou shalt not play the harlot: that is, thou shalt not commit idolatry. Which is said, because the Jews after their return from the captivity of Babylon, some few excepted in the time of the Maccabees, have not committed idolatry. And thou shalt not be with man, that is, with Christ Iesus, and I will wait for thee, For the children of Israel shall remain many days without a king, and without a Prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar, and without an ephod, that is, without priestly garments, and without Teraphim, that is, without the ornaments of the Temple. And afterwards the Children of Israel shall return, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their King,

King ; that is, Christ born of David, *and shall fear before the Lord looking after eternall blessings in the last days.* See therefore how rationally this Prophecie is expounded of Jesus of Nazareth, the same likewise may be seen in other Prophecies by those who shall diligently reade them. But returning to our purpose we say that the time of the Messias being already past, not onely that which is determined by the holy scriptures, but also the same which hath been prefixt by many Masters of the Iews, and no other having appeared but Iesus of Nazareth, in whom all the properties of the Messias are met, we cannot deny but he is the Christ who was promised in the law, and in the Prophets. This

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This their last captivity testifies the very same thing, if we diligently compare it with the captivity of Babylon so much prophesied of. For it is most certain, that that captivity befell them because of the greivous sins which they had committed, and especially for the sin of Idolatry greater then all others, and yet in the captivity they wanted not their Princes and Prophets and other knowing men to comfort them, and this punishment lasted but seventy years. But this last captivity hath endured already a thousand four hundred years, wherein they have been destitute of all comfort without princes, without prophets, and without learned men. Nor did God ever comfort them so far
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as to declare the term of this their captivity; the cause whereof notwithstanding was not the sin of Idolatry, for they did not incur that sin, as is above-said, since the captivity of Babylon. We demand then of the Jews what is the cause of so great a punishment, they being dispersed all the world over and hated of all. Certainly the sin of Idolatry being the greatest, and they having not committed that sin for so many hundreds of years, they ought to have continued a shorter time, and withall to have received more comfort in this their second captivity then in the first. Who doth not therefore see that they have committed some other greater sin then that of Idolatry, which
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can be no other then that they have so despitefully crucified the Son of God, whom both by his life, and miracles, as well as by the prophecies they knew to be the Messias which was sent to them, and nevertheless by their perfidiousness and great malice they crucified him, wherein, except some few of them onely, they have persevered even to this present hour, and therefore they are dispersed over all the world, to the end they may bear witness to our Faith.

Again, forasmuch as there hath not appeared for along time amongst the people of the Jews any mark of holiness, or of the true divine worship, but onely covetousness and other sins, and especially since prophesie fails amongst

amongst them, and that God shewes no signe, as he did heretofore, that they are his people, and since there hath been seen heretofore, and daily is, in the Church of the Gentiles, all holiness of life, all good worship, and the wonderfull stupendious works of Christ and of his Saints (as we have spoken before) 'tis manifest that the Prophecy of the Prophet *Malachy* is fulfilled, who speakes in the person of God to the Jews after this manner. *I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand, saith the Lord of hosts: for from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts, and in every place shall be offered unto my name*

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name pure sacrifice and offerings; for my name shall be great among the heathen saith the Lord of hosts.

Certainly God being not with the people of the Jews, if he were not with the heathen people, it would follow that he had altogether abandoned the world.

Again, if God do not despise little things, much more will he not despise those things that are great. Seeing therefore that he hath declared to his Prophets innumerable things, much inferior to those which Christ and his Church have done, as of those small kingdoms of the Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites, and the like; it would be strange if he should with silence have past over the stupendious works of Christ, especially since he pro-

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nounced all the evils which have befallen the Iews, even before they were alive. None therefore having caused greater and more continual evils to the Iews, then the Empire of Christ hath done; we cannot reasonably say, that God hath not made any mention thereof in the holy Scriptures, having made mention of Nabuchadonosor, and other kings and people, who did them less evil then the Christians have done. The Scripture then making mention of Christ, and comparing his works with the words of the Prophets, we may clearly see, that no other propheties can be attributed to him, then those which appertain to the Messias, as appears in the expositions of our holy Doctours.

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We must therefore needs say, that either God hath deceived them, which none but fools will say; or that Christ Iesus is the true Messias, which is truth.

Again, if we search well into all Histories, we shall find that before the coming of Christ, God continually did many wonderfull things amongst the people of the Jews; but that since his coming, never any singular thing was seen in that people, which is a manifest signe that they are abandoned by God.

Furthermore, the blindness of their understanding declares this, as appears in their foolish doctrine, wherein they teach so many fables, that they seem to have lost all humane judgement. And in their expositions of the holy
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Scripture, they are intangled in so many, and such manifest errors, that it is a wonder they are not ashamed to think of them, much less to write them. We might alledge many other reasons against them; but because this matter hath been so plentifully declared by our holy Doctours, these shall suffice for the present; with which if we conjoyn those we have spoken of in the second book, they will make it certain, that Iesus of Nazareth is the true God, and the true Messias promised by the Prophets.

CHAP. VI.

That the sect of the Mahumetans is altogether unreasonable.

BECAUSE the Mahumetans do follow the circumcision of the

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the Jews, and do heap up in their sect -as it were all heresies, we will dispute in the last place against them. Although it be no great labour to convince them: for he that converseth with them, and sees their religion, and reads the Alcaron of the Mahometans, will easily comprehend their vanity: Because every true religion either proceeds from natural or supernatural light; but their superstitious religion cannot proceed either from the one or the other, in regard that every one who is but meanly vers'd in Philosophy, will easily subvert it, and find that Mahomet was altogether ignorant; because he composed his book, called the Alcaron, that is, a collection of precepts, so confusedly, that I

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think there is none in the world who knows how to put it in order, which is a chief signe of ignorance, and of want of judgement. Besides that herein there are so many fables, and so many things against all good manners, that it is much better to deride it, then to take pains to confute it. Whence it appears, that such laws cannot proceed from natural light, to which they are contrary; and much less from supernatural, because whatsoever is contrary to natural light, is much more contrary to supernatural, as we shall shew hereafter.

Again, that which hath an evil beginning, seldome or never hath a good end. But this sect had an evil beginning, namely, Mahomet (as Histories say) a
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man altogether unreasonable, impious, adulterous, a robber of Philosophers, who having the falling-sickness, and falling many times upō the ground, being asked what that meant, he answered, that then an angel spake with him. This man then, not with reason, but with force and flattery, gathered to him robbers, and men of gross wits, and full of sin, and with these he subdued much people; whereby it appears that this sect can never have any good end.

Again, Mahomet in the Alcaron, approves of the Gospel, and the Old Testament, and commends Christ, confessing that he was a most true Prophet, born of the Virgin Mary: but sayes afterwards that the Gospel

and the Old Testament were depraved by the Christians. Now how easie it is to refute this, is manifest to any, who shall consider the conformity of the books of the Old and New Testament, dispersed over all the world, as well old as new, in Hebrew, Greek, Latine; and many other languages. How then is it possible in so great diversity of languages, and in such a multitude of books, as well of the Christians, as the Jews, and other Infidels; and that as well in the Old as New, there should be such an uniformity, if the Christians had corrected those books? This uniformity shews the fables of the Alcaron of Mahomet, and the Alcaron it self to be full of lies.

Again, every true Religion is
ordain-

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ordained to puritie of life and heart, and to the contemplation of truth. But the sect of Mahomet is altogether earthly, and makes no mention at all of true felicity, but suffers after this life corporeal and bestial pleasures. Nor can it be said, that Mahomet spoke parabolically, because there is not found in his book any exposition of such parables as is found in our Scripture.

Again, in this sect there is not found any thing that is wonderfull or divine, as is found in the Christian religion. Whence Mahomet confesseth, that Christ was sent by God to convert the world with miracles, but that he was sent to convert it with the sword. Which is folly: since God is not pleased with tyrannie, and

forced service ; so that there is nothing which is singular to be found in his doctrine; they thinking they say a great matter, when they say , that there is no God, but God and Mahomet his Messenger; and that God is great and mighty, and such like things mingled with many fables, which our children would not own.

Again , amongst them there are found no Prophets , holy men, and authours of supernatural things, as in the Christian religion; but they honour certain fools as holy men, who if they strike themselves , and do certain follies with the gestures of the body, are esteemed by them, and yet they know nothing of divine things.

Moreover, Mahomet in the
Al-

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Alcaron often contradicts himself, and is so foolish that he saith, that he knows not whether he or his be in the way of salvation; and that he beleevs that no one understands his law. Surely since he proposed a law which could not be understood, and left men doubtfull of salvation, I wonder that he was not stoned by that people. His laws therefore being not founded either in natural reason, or in miracles, or in holiness of life; it follows, that he ought to be derided of every man. And there is no doubt but if it might be preached, they themselves would easily discover their own errors: but Mahomet most cunningly commanded that to be defended with the sword, which could not be defended with reason.

But perhaps it may seem strange to some, that the Law of Christ being already founded over all the world, Mahomet should subvert so many people, and estrange them from Christ; because hereby it may seem, that Mahomet hath excelled Christ, especially since his kingdom hath continually encreased; whence they say, that God is with them, and that their faith is true. This is the greatest Argument that they have against us, which doth so much intangle the brain of many of our Christians.

But we answer, *First*, that this reason not infringing those which we have given above to prove that Christ is true God, and no other religion having such reasons

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reasons, we ought firmly to believe that the Christian religion is onely the true religion, and not to be moved from it by such weak arguments; especially since there is not found in the laws of Mahomet, or any other a better life, or things more wonderfull then those we have mentioned above. *Secondly*, we answer that if this reason concludes, we must also needs conclude that the divel is better then Christ, who hath subverted to his Empire many more nations then either Christ or Mahomet. And by the same reason we ought also rather to follow the impiety of wicked men, then the piety of just men; because the wicked are more then the good. What a wonderful argument is this to prefer

prefer Mahomet before Christ, because he hath subverted many people with the sword, and subjected them to an unreasonable and bestial law? Certainly our Arguments are not such, nor was our religion founded in this manner. And what wonder is it if few follow Christ, seeing that he enjoyns men to live well, and to suffer evil even unto the death, promising nothing but what is invisable. Assuredly if these reasons were good, not onely supernatural doctrine, but even natural Philosophy would be confounded, because then we must needs say that good were evil, and truth falsehood, and light darkness: For if that which the multitude follows, be truth, and goodness, and light, since those
who

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who live according to reason have always been and still are so few, we must necessarily confound every thing. *Thirdly*, we answer, that as Christ hath heretofore, and commonly doth permit men to be subverted who do not walk in the truth; so he suffered Mahomet to subvert those people by reason of their sins. Certainly if Christ had pleased, and their sins had not deserved it, Mahomet could not have done any thing. For if Christ, when as yet he was not known, and the world was full of Idolatry, without any armes converted men so wonderfully to his love, as we have abovesaid; how much more can he do it at present, he being now so renowned, and so glorious in the world..

world. But as we have said, he suffered this errour to run amongst that people because of their sins. We answer further that it is not strange, but very consonant to the doctrine of Christ, that few should follow him, and many abandon him; whence he himself saith. *That many are called, but few chosen.* Besides the Church often increaseth and often diminisheth: for man hath free-will, and God forceth no man to live well, but God draws men with his love, by proposing to them eternal blessings, and threatning them with diverse punishments who shall not live well, the chief amongst which is blindness of minde. Whence David speaking in the person of Christ and
of

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of all the just against the wicked,
saith. *Let their eyes be darkened
that they may not see, and let them
run into sin, and the Lord speak-
ing by Esay saith: Go and make
the heart of this people blind, and
and make their ears heavy, and
shut their eyes, that they may not
see with their eyes, nor hear with
their ears, nor understand with
their hearts, lest they should be
converted, and I should heal them.*

This was the chief punishment
inflicted on the Iews, namely,
blindness and obstinacy of mind,
which was declared to them
by Christ and by the Prophets.
Also we read in the Catholick
doctrine *that many should depart
from the Faith.* Whence our
Saviour speaking of the last days
said. *Because iniquity shall a-
bound*

bound the love of many shall wax cold. And in another place he said When the son of man shall come, shall he finde faith upon the earth? And the Apostle Paul writes these words to Timothy. The spirit speakes manifestly that in the last times many shall depart from the faith, and shall give heed to spirits of errour, and to doctrines of divels who in hypocrysie shall tell many lies. Finally if we turn over the doctrine of the Gospel, we shall finde these things to have been foretold by Christ, and that they have ensued, because he suffered them by reason of the ingratitude and malice of people, leaving them to run into this blindness, then which no punishment is more grievous; especially because it brings
men

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men to eternal punishment.

But perhaps some will say, that it does not seem just that the children should be punished for the iniquity of the fathers; and therefore if the Jews and Mahumetans sinned, God ought to have punished them with such a blindness, and not to have suffered their children, their nephews and descendents to have incurred the same punishment.

To which we answer, That the faith of Christ being already manifest to all the world, no one can excuse himself if he do not believe it. Assuredly children should not be punished together with their fathers, if they did not follow the sins of their fathers. And the less can men excuse themselves, because if they lived accord-

cording to natural reason, and sought of God their own salvation; how know they but that God, who never forsakes any till they forsake him, would have enlightened them with the true faith? However, we know that many are the judgments of God which we cannot find out. Whence the Apostle saith, that *God hath concluded all men in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all*; and immediately after, considering the unscrutable and most profound abyss of the divine Majesty, he cries out, and saith, *O the depth of the riches, of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how incomprehensible are his judgments, and his ways unsearchable! Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsel-*
sel-

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*seller? or who hath given him first,
and it shall be repaid him? for of
him, and to him, and through him
are all things, to him be glory for
ever and ever. Amen.*

We must know nevertheless,
that as our Lord Jesus Christ
hath fore-told that these evils
were to come, so he hath also
fore-told, that his Church should
never fail. *Behold, I am with you
always (saith he) even unto the end
of the world.* As the evil there-
fore which he hath fore-told is
come to pass; so we must beleeve
that the good fore-told by him
shall continue, especially since the
Church hath such foundations,
that it is a folly to beleeve it can
fail. And we hope that since
Christ hath punished false Chri-
stians, he will renew his Church,
and

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and spread it over all the world;
and this we know shall be done
presently, that there may be one
shepherd and one sheep-fold, and
so the ship of the Church shall
sail to the end of the world, some-
times with prosperous, & some-
times with contrary winds. But
forasmuch as the law of Maho-
met is not founded either upon
humane or divine reason, it cannot
long endure: for no violent thing
can be perpetual.

CHAP. VII.

*That the Christian Religion is true
and stable for ever.*

SEeing therefore that all Reli-
gion proceeds either from na-
tural or supernatural light, or from
both together, if there be found
any

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any other religions or superstitions besides those we have spoken of, they may be reckoned amongst these, and confuted by the same reasons. For every religion which proceeds from natural light alone, either proceeds from the true principles of natural reason, and this is the religion of Philosophers, which we have shewed not to be sufficient to salvation. Or it hath its original from false principles of reason; and this may be two ways: either by depending upon false principles of natural things, and this is the superstition of Astrologers, which we have confuted above; or upon false principles invented by devils, and this is Idolatrie, which we have condemned by many reasons. As
to

to the religion which proceeds from supernatural light, there is no other to be found but those which are grounded upon the old and new Testament, now these are either grounded upon the old Testament alone; and this is the error of the Jews, or they pervert the new as Hereticks do, or they confound the one and the other, as the Mahumetans. But the Christian religion hath both the old and the new Testament for its foundation, and compriseth both natural and supernatural light. Whereas therefore these are the principal religions which are found in the world, and that the Christian religion exceeds all others in reasons, and in miracles, & in every other thing as much as
the

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the heaven exceeds the earth, & light darkness, it is manifest that this alone is the true religion and the safe haven of happiness.

And to take away all cavil. If any should say that possibly some better Religion then the Christian may yet come into the world; this can no way diminish the glory of the faith of Christ. First because there being found no other better then this at present, we ought without doubt to follow this till we shall see a better. We answer also that it is unreasonable to expect that a better should come; because it being not possible to finde or think of any better end, or better and more certain means to attain it, or a more perfect life, or greater and more wonderfull things

things then those which the Christian religion preacheth as we have above shewed, there cannot certainly come any other religion that can excel it. But put case however, that there should come a better religion then the Christian religion is, it does not therefore follow, that the christian religion is to be condemned. For this proceeding from supernatural light, & not disagreeing in any thing wth natural light, it cannot have proceeded but frō God, as we have proved above, and therefore it cannot be rejected by any other religion, let it be what it will; but rather every religion that we admit were to comemore perfect then it, would greatly approve it, and commend it. Because such a religion would either
pro-

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proceed from natural or superna-
tural light:but let it proceed from
what it will, it must needs ap-
prove of, and commend the
Christian religion; for truth is
always consonant to truth, and
all that proceeds from these
lights must needs be true pro-
ceeding from God the Creator
both of the one and the other
light, by which he en'lightens
all men with his truth. And if
these lights were contrary, see-
ing if one contrary be true, the
other necessarily must be false,
we must then necessarily say that
God at one time taught men
true things, and at another time
false, which is very absurd; be-
cause if God should put into our
understanding contrary notions,
he would thereby intangle it, that
it

it could not know the truth, which is far enough from God. And therefore we must necessarily say, that let what religion will come, it must needs approve and commend the Christian religion, as that which in truth brings men to eternal salvation.

CHAP. VIII.

The conclusion of the whole work.

BUt because the reasons above-said, being all collected together, have the greater force; we will in the end of this our work, briefly touch upon all that hath been spoken. We say then that Christians do not lightly, but most wisely beleeve and observe the faith of Christ, and his commandments. For it is every

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very wise-mans part, considering the greatness and wonderfull order of the Universe, to beleieve that there is a God, that is, a first mover, and first cause of every thing; because every thing that is moved, being moved by another, we must needs say (as is above-said) that there is a first mover. And the spirit being more noble then the body, we must needs say likewise, that he is a spirit, and a simple substance, or a pure act: and from hence it follows that he is perfect, and the chiefest good, and an infinite power, immutable, eternal, and One. And we seeing that noble things, by how much they are more elevated from the matter, by so much they participate more of knowledge, no one can
X say,

say, that God is not the chief intelligence, and that he hath not free-will, by means whereof he works, and not by necessity of nature. And he working in every thing, even in the least, by his understanding and will, we must needs see that his providence ruleth over every thing, but especially over man, for whom he made all natural things. It belongs therefore to God to direct man to his end, which is the contemplation of divine things, as we have proved above. Which blessedness cannot be in this present life, considering the miseries thereof, and the little knowledge we have of God: and therefore we are constrained to confess, there is another life after this, & to say, that our soul is immortal, and the form
of

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of the body; otherwise we cannot avoid many inconveniencies, as hath been declared above. And so the order of natural things being well considered, it appears that what the Catholick Faith teacheth of God, and of the blessedness of man is reasonable, and most wisely said.

If we further set before our eyes, the Triumph above described, we shall see that Christians do most prudently confess the faith of Christ. Certainly we cannot deny but that there is some true religion in the world, men being naturally inclin'd to the divine worship; which is the way to come to blessedness. And the manner of living well being the end of such worship, or rather a good life being the true worship,

by which God is perfectly honoured, forasmuch as there can be found no better life then the Christian; we must needs say that the Christian Religion is true, and that therein consists the true divine worship, by which men are rightly brought to blessedness. And if it seem a hard and high thing to beleieve that Jesus Christ crucified is God and man, consider that if this were an error, such a faith could not beget, nourish, and increase the Christian life, the most perfect of all other. After this we may see, that the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, on which all our faith is founded, cannot be but from God, innumerable things being already verified w^{ch} are therein fore-told, & especially

cially because they have brought forth so great faith in the world. Certainly, if the faith were false, this could not be hid from men who are most pure, especially when they are in prayer and contemplation of divine things; but we see that these do more confirm it than others. Furthermore, the outward worship would not make men who devoutly use it perfect, & those who irreverently use it would not become worse. And if the faith were vain, it could not beget so great a joy, and tranquillity, and liberty of mind in Christians, that they esteem tribulations to be their delights and comforts, nor would such a sincerity and pleasantness appear in their very countenance, making them venerable in the

fight of men, so as to draw their minds to a good Christian conversation. Moreover, if we consider the power of Christ, by which he hath overcome all the gods, Emperours, Tyrants, Philosophers, Hereticks, and all the barbarous nations, without arms, without riches, without humane wisdom, so many martyrs dying and suffering daily for him; and also his wonderfull wisdom, by which with incredible quickness he enlightened and purged the world from its errors; and if we joyn herewith the consideration of his goodness, by which he hath drawn innumerable men to his love, in such manner, that they have not onely contemned the things of the world, but willingly suffered every
every

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every kind of martyrdom, rather then they would denie the least iota of his faith; who can denie the faith of Christ to be true? what man? what god hath ever done such things? which if he did without miracles, in that he did them without miracles, it is the greatest of all miracles, And if he did them with miracles, it follows, that the Christian Religion is approved by God.

And if after all this we diligently consider the doctrine of Christ we shall finde nothing therein contrary to reason; for if it confess the mystery of the Trinity, there may be found the image thereof even in the creatures, and it is reasonable to beleeve that God hath created every thing, because we must

needs grant an efficient cause to every thing. And whereas man is ordained to a supernatural blessedness, we do rightly acknowledge the sanctification and glory of our souls, and the soul being imperfect without the body, is it not meet that we beleeve the Resurrection of our bodies? And that the senses of glorified bodies, especially the eye, may have objects that are more perfect and more convenient for such a state, we do rightly beleeve that this whole world shall be glorified.

Furthermore it was not impossible to the infinite power of God, that God should become man, he being able to do more then we can think, which thing was very convenient to give
men

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men the knowledge of true blessedness and the means to attain it, and also to give satisfaction to the eternal Father for their sins. And for this end it was meet he should be born of a Virgin, and die upon the Cross to pay our debts, and to shew us that notwithstanding Gods justice we need not fear any death. And that we might have hope of our Resurrection he was raised from death to life; and made judge both of the quick and dead; because he was wrongfully condemned by the unjust. The Christian faith therefore confesseth nothing contrary to reason.

In like manner as to Morall and Judicial matters there can be nothing more reasonable then what it teacheth, there being

found no better a life then the Christian life, nor any government so exact as that of the Church, all that is spoken by Philosophers and other wise men, being contained in the Christian doctrine much more perfectly then in any other: nor is there any thing impossible or unreasonable in the Sacraments or ceremonies of the Church, as the holiness of their life shews who devoutly observe them.

What religion therefore is founded upon so great reasons as ours is? Certainly the Philosophers (as we shewed) knew not the true end of mans life. Astrologers involved themselves in many superstitions. Idolaters had nothing that was good or honest. Against the Jews their
OWN

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own prophecies and present captivity bear witness. All Philosophy makes against the Mahumetans. The Christian religion onely is that which is confirmed by natural and supernatural light, by holiness of life, by wisdom, by miracles and stupendious works. What wise-man then will not embrace the faith of Christ? who doth not see how foolish and unadvised they are who speak against it? Which hath been so approved by God, and preserved so many hundreds of years in the midst of innumerable persecutions, and consecrated by the blood of infinite Martyrs. Every one therefore that is not void of sense must needs confess, that the faith of Christ is most true, and beleieve
that

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that there is another life which
all must pass unto, and so come
to be presented before the Tri-
bunal of the dreadfull Judge:
who shall set on his left hand of
eternal punishment the wicked;
and on his right hand of eternal
bliss the good, which shall for e-
ver see God, one in Trinity, in-
effable, immense; and shall per-
petually enjoy him by the grace
of our most invincible Lord and
Redeemer Christ Jesus. To
whom be always honour, vertue,
power, and empire, world with-
out end. Amen.

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